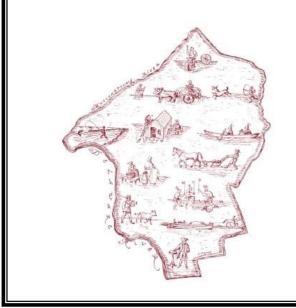
# THE FIRST 300 YEARS © OF © HUNTERDON COUNTY 1714-2014





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### Acknowledgements, 2014

## The original 1964 book was dedicated to Linton Alles (1909-1964)

"who served with distinction on the Board of Freeholders and who inspired the idea of placing on record a glimpse of the first 250 years" of Hunterdon County.

County residents recognized in a foreword by the 1964 Freeholders not mentioned elsewhere in this new 2014 issue are

Mrs. Clark Kinnaird

John Lea

Inez P. Prall

Edward H. Quick

### Cover design by Elizabeth Rice

Sketches at chapter heads were drawn by James R. Marsh for the original 1964 edition, except for education and healthcare, which are public domain clip art

Credits for photographs are shown with each picture. Some photos are repeated on the cover.



*Robert Hunter (1664-1734)* 

Hunterdon County was named for Robert Hunter through a corruption of Hunterston, his former home in England. A Scot, he became a British military officer and Colonial Governor of both New York and New Jersey from 1710-1720. He completed his career as Governor of Jamaica, where he died.

Portrait of Hunter attributed to Sir Godfrey Kneller, courtesy of the New York Historical Society.

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### About the Authors

**Frank E. Burd** (1890-1985), a Reading Academy graduate, spent his life as an educator, retiring as school superintendent in South Bound Brook. His writing and files of vital statistics he developed are especially valuable to researchers at the Hunterdon County Historical Society where he was a member for 74 years.

**Jay Comeforo** (1922-2010) held BS and MS degrees from Rutgers in Ceramics Engineering, a PhD from the Univ. of Illinois, and an MBA from Rider College. He founded and ran a ceramics company in Clinton, was a Civil War history buff, and wasactive in numerous civic and historical groups in Hunterdon.

**George Conard** followed service in the US Air Force with a 27-year career with the Farm Credit Service, advancing from loan officer to chief appraiser. A keen observer of farming techniques and trends, he applied knowledge gained from experience to help Hunterdon County farmers become more successful.

**John Kellogg**, a Colgate University graduate, holds a Master 's degree in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers. He served as Hunterdon County Planning Director from 1979 until retiring in 2004. Under his leadership, Hunterdon's successful farmland preservation program was established in the early 1980's.

**John W. Kuhl** is a Penn State graduate with dual majors in Naval Science and Poultry Science. Before his career in commercial agriculture, he was a US Navy ship's officer in the Antarctic in the 1950s. A writer and collector of Civil War items, local history and genealogy, he is a popular lecturer.

**Jay Langley**, a Dartmouth College graduate, had a 40-year career at the *Hunterdon County Democrat*, ending as executive editor. With his wife, he initiated four newspapers, two web sites, a weekly cable TV talk show, and published five local history books. He is currently writing several books.

**Edward J. Mack** (1930-1995) graduated from Rutgers University and over his career advised its student-run newspaper. He was editor of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* from 1965 to 1984 and returned in 1989 as general manager. Ed gave countless young reporters their start and was active in the community.

**Kenneth V. Myers** (1914-1995) devoted a lifetime of service to Hunterdon. He was a Freeholder, originator of an oral history project, author of *The Flemington Fair Story*, a trustee of the Medical Center, advocate for the establishment of Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Museum, and much more.

**Bernard F. Ramsburg** (1903-1985), a graduate of the University of West Virginia, came to Hunterdon in 1935 and was named the County's first 4-H Club agent in 1936. He held the position until 1960 when he was named State 4-H agent. He retired one year later and moved to Arizona.

**David R. Reading** is a retired software engineering consultant and the Executive Director of the Mount Amwell Project, Inc., a Hunterdon County historical preservation charity. He is a 9th generation Hunterdon resident and edited and published *John Reading's Diary* in 2010.

**Hubert G. Schmidt, PhD** (1905-1980) was a Professor of History at Rutgers University and an authority on New Jersey's history. The author or editor of several books, most notably *Rural Hunterdon* in 1945, he also wrote a weekly column in the *Hunterdon County Democrat* for many years.

**Stephanie B. Stevens** is a retired special education teacher and the Historian of Hunterdon County. Recognized as a *NJ Woman of Distinction* in 1999 by the NJ Legislature, she has been Mayor of Readington Township, founded several museums there, and written six books on local history.

**Pauline Brown (Mrs. Frederick) Stothoff** (1920-1999) was highly regarded for her writing and her clear soprano voice, which won her a spot in the noted Bach Choir of Bethlehem, PA. A member of the Hunterdon County Historical Society, she served as a trustee and membership chairman.

**Robert P. Wise**, President and CEO of Hunterdon Healthcare since 1990, earned a BA at Boston College and a Masters in Public Health from the Univ. of Pittsburgh. He also is President of Hunterdon Medical Center, HMC Foundation, Hunterdon Regional Community Health, and the Mid-Jersey Health Corp.

**Norman C. Wittwer** (1919-1982) was an engineer and long-time president of the Hunterdon County Historical Society. His research on the Palatine Germans and NJ's first German Lutheran Church, Zion Lutheran in Oldwick, resulted in *The Faithful and the Bold*, still deemed the most definitive book on the subject.

**Cynthia Yard** has a BA from Thomas Edison State College and an MA in Public Administration from Rutgers. Her 40-year career in public service includes work at the Hunterdon Developmental Center in Clinton and from 1998 to 2013 as County Administrator, CEO of Hunterdon's public service delivery system.

### *Introduction, 1964* by Hubert G. Schmidt

The year 1964 marks the three hundredth anniversary of the first English settlements in New Jersey. To most readers of this book, it will be equally interesting to learn that in truth it is also the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the formation of Hunterdon County as a seperate political entity. This requires a word of explanation, for most books give 1713 rather than 1714 as the date. (Snell's History gives both dates.) The actual date was March 11, 1713, by the Julian Calendar, but this calendar was replaced by the Gregorian Calendar in all English possessions in 1752. Since even George Washington revised his birth date according to the "New Style," it seems only proper that Hunterdon County should do so. All statements to the contrary, Hunterdon's date of beginning, according to our present calendar, was March 22, 1714.

Within New Jersey's first fifty years, that is, by 1714, settlers in Hunterdon had put that area into the main current of development. The heartland of the original far-flung Hunterdon County of 1714 still retains the name after a quarter of a millennium, and the descendants of many of the original settlers are still to be found here. The long history of Hunterdon has been one of unity, comparatively speaking, and of slow and orderly development. Much of the area's past is still mirrored on its present. That this will not long be true seems obvious, since the region of which Hunterdon is a part may soon be swallowed, with hardly time for a shudder, by the great urban-industrial sprawl.

Let us hasten, therefore, to put to paper as much of the past as we can, while at the same time fighting a valiant fight to preserve historical documents, the best of our old buildings, and part of our countryside as parks. We do these things less for ourselves than for those who follow us, for they will have only as much of the past as we preserve for them.

The essays of this book were written by men and women who are much concerned with the preserving of something of our historical heritage. They have not attempted, on this anniversary date, to write a complete history of Hunterdon County. Rather, as a labor of love, they have given you essays on subjects in which they are interested, and even as regards their specialties, they have been limited as to space and as to available time. In a sense it is an invitation to others to write on phases of the County's history that are not covered here.

### *Introduction, 2014* by Stephanie B. Stevens

How exciting to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this most beautiful County!

More specifically, the changes to everyday life in these last 25 years have been enormous. We as Americans have progressed from sending a man to the moon to landing a robot on Mars! Our Hunterdon schools have now replaced books with iPads, computers and smart boards. Electronics have provided unlimited access to the world and everything in it. County population, 107,776 in 1990, now tops 127,000. Farmers, heretofore the dominant group in Hunterdon, are now the endangered species. Yet this verdant county leads the State in preservation of farmland and open space. Throughout the County both land and historic preservation are alive and well as we look to the future. Ours is a population that realizes that the lessons of the past are the visions of tomorrow.

Moving into this new era all of Hunterdon is alive with expectations and anticipations of what lies ahead. The questions of the future remain to be answered, while the past, depicted in this little tome, presents a security of time and place, a knowledge of who we were.

Today and tomorrow we are us - a whole new group of caring people continuing to be devoted to the betterment of Hunterdon, its land, its students, its society.

Happy birthday to Us!

### The Dawn of Hunterdon, 1964 by Norman C. Wittwer



The subject of prehistory, as applied to the land now embraced by the borders of Hunterdon, is generally associated with the ethnology of the local Indian tribes. One might introduce the story of Hunterdon by letting the land emerge from mist-shrouded eons of geological and paleontological development, the treatment, of necessity, being of a more general nature than what this booklet purposes to present. It is more appropriate, in these few pages, to confine our attention to subjects that belong to Hunterdon alone or otherwise contribute to her history.

That the Indian dwelt in present Hunterdon County previous to the white man's coming is well known. It is apparent in the abundance of relics that have been and are yet being found, plus the names, still in use, that they gave to streams, hills and villages. We know that Indians called themselves Lenni Lenape, or "Original People," and that the colonists renamed them Delaware, after the river along or near which most of them lived. How and when they reached New Jersey are questions that remain to be answered. Archeological evidence indicates that New Jersey has been inhabited for at least five thousand years, though it fails to establish an ancestral tie between the Lenape and the inhabitants of the Archaic Period. According to what is reputed to be Lenape legend, they originated in Canada and migrated through western New York to Ohio, thence eastward toward the Atlantic, arriving in New Jersey only a few hundred years before the European colonists. Attempts to trace the migration archeologically have led to no definite conclusions.

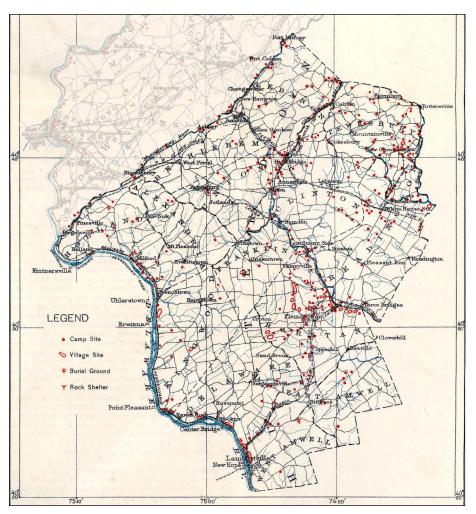
The Lenape nation was composed of three tribes, the Minsi in the north, the Unami in the central portion and the Unalachtigo in the southern part of the state. The language of the Lenape was divided into two dialects, one used by the Unami and the Unalachtigo, and the other by the Minsi. It has never been determined whether present-day Hunterdon was under the dominion of the Minsi or the Unami. The confusing intermingling of names belonging to the two dialects leads to the possible conclusion that this was border territory, perhaps first in possession of one tribe and then in possession

of the other. One bit of evidence does exist, however, that mentions the Minsi in connection with present Hunterdon. On his 1717 parchment map of the Society Line (separating the West Jersey Society's Great Tract from the Willocks Indian Purchase), James Alexander shows a "Minisink Path" along Cold Brook and crossing the line about two miles north of Oldwick. One authority on the Indians of New Jersey writes, ". . . it appears on the coming of the Dutch that the Raritans (Unami) held dominion in the Raritan watershed. The Sanhicans (Unami) inhabited the Delaware Valley in the vicinity of Trenton, and the Musconetcongs (Minsi), the Sourland and Cushetunk mountains and the plateau region north of Flemington."

Most of the Indian names still in use are easily recognized as such. None would question the Indian origin of Wickecheoke, Lockatong, Nishesakawick, Mulhockway, Neshanic or Cushetunk. One might be unsure about Rockaway. Who, on the other hand, would look to a Lenape dictionary of such seemingly English names as Lamington (Alamatunk), Prescott (Piscot) Brook, or Locktown (probably Lockatong). Yet these, too, were of Indian origin.

A survey conducted between 1912 and 1915 disclosed four hundred and sixty-two camps, villages, burial sites and rock shelters within Hunterdon County. Principal concentrations were in the Delaware River Valley (thirty-eight sites), Flemington area (eighty-two sites), Oldwick area (fifty-nine sites), and the High Bridge area (forty-four sites). Nearly every old Hunterdon family has gathered some artifacts; arrow and spear points, knives, scrapers, hammers, axes, net sinkers and bits of pottery are typical finds. The Hunterdon County Historical Society has in its possession two major collections. The John C. Thatcher collection is a display of several thousand pieces collected largely on the Thatcher farm, west of Flemington. The Deats collection, principally gathered by the late Hiram E. Deats on his Minneakoning Farm at Flemington Junction, is properly described as a research collection, it too comprising several thousand pieces. From these articles and from historic accounts we have come to know much of the habits, customs, and daily pursuits of our redskinned predecessors.

Many Indian paths, some important, and some minor, crisscrossed the County. One of the more important was the Raritan path which followed up the Raritan to Racahovawalaby (Bound Brook), thence to Tuccaramahacking at the forks of the Raritan, thence to Whitehouse, Potterstown, Lebanon, Annandale, to Minsolackaway near High Bridge, thence through the pass by Glen Gardner to the village of Pelouese at Hampton. This path led ultimately to the forks of the Delaware at Easton and was a trade route and one followed by early



This Hunterdon half of a map made by Max Schrabisch in 19145-1915 shows "locations of Indian Habitations in Warren and Hunterdon Counties New Jersey". The legend indicates symbols for camp sites, village sites, burial grounds, and rock shelters. Many County residents have found Indian artifacts on their property. Photo from the Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission

explorers in their search for minerals in the mountains of Pennsylvania. The Malayelick path originated in the Village of Assampink (Trenton), went through Wishalamonsey (Rocktown) to Essakau-queamenshehikkon near Quakertown, through Pittstown, thence west of Pattenburg to Bloomsbury and eventually to the village of Lopatcong (Phillipsburg). Another important east-west trail crossed from Pennsylvania at the old Indian Village of Nishalemensey (Lambertville), continued to Rocktown, Neshanic, Tuccaramahacking, Bound Brook, Elizabeth and Staten Island.

From the archeological evidences in Hunterdon alone that are men-

tioned earlier, one might suppose that the wilderness teemed with savages at the time of the coming of the white man, but such was not the case. Robert Evelin, writing of the present New Jersey in the 1640s said, "I doe account all the Indians to be eight hundred." Other reliable estimates range up to two thousand natives. Indeed, this fact was exploited in a pamphlet of 1683 designed to attract settlers to East Jersey in which is stated, "The Indian Natives in this country are but few, comparative to the Neighboring Colonies; and those that are there, are so far from being formidable or injurious to the Planters and Inhabitants, that they are really serviceable and advantageous to [the] English)..." Jasper Danckaerts, in 1679, made the following observation relative to land along the Delaware, "There are Quakers who either are more wise, or through poverty act so, who do not buy land on the east side of the [Delaware] river but buy on the west side where it is cheaper in consequence of the Indians being there."

The earliest written record of the Hunterdon area was probably the journal kept by one Beauchamp Plantagenet as he, in company with Sir Edmund Ployden, marched, "lodged and cabinned together among the Indians" of New Albion (New Jersey) for seven years. Sir Edmund Ployden had been granted by Charles I in 1631, all of the land now included in New Jersey. He and other nobles, to whom the talk of democracy and opposition to the established church were so repugnant, planned a county palatine where they hoped to become lords in the new world.

In Plantagenet's account of his travels, published in 1648 and entitled *New Albion*, he writes of "the Raritan king whose seat is at a place called Mount Ployden twenty miles from the Sandhay Sea, and ninety from the ocean, next to Amara hill, the retired paradice of the children of the Ethiopian Emperor – a wonder, for it is a square rock, two miles compass, one hundred and fifty feet high, a wall-like precipice, a strait entrance, easily made invincible, where he keeps two hundred of his guards, and under is a flat valley all plain to plant and sow."

Some researchers have attempted to identify the above kingly seat with Hunterdon's Round Valley, some with Somerset's Chimney Rock or Neshanic Mountain. Others insist, however, that the place existed only in the imagination of the author. The late Charles A. Philhower who devoted more than half a century to the study of New Jersey Indians, has suggested that Round Valley might fit the location if by the Sandhay Sea were meant Lake Hopatcong and if the distance from the ocean be measured up the Delaware rather than across the land ... perhaps from the head of Delaware Bay.

The account of New Albion certainly touches the southern border of old Hunterdon and the access to it from the eastward. Reports flowing back from West India Company's investigation of the Pahaquarry Copper mines above the Delaware Water Gap during the same decade joined with Plantagenet's New Albion, and others soon to follow, in heralding the dawn of modern history in Hunterdon.

The ownership of the land by the Lenape was recognized by the English. This was undoubtedly more the result of convenience than of any altruistic concern for the welfare of the natives. By so doing, the way was cleared for purchasing lands for trifling amounts and thus extinguishing the Indian title without trouble or hard feelings. A law was passed by the General Free Assembly of West Jersey in March 1683 that provided "that no Person or Persons, shall presume to buy any tract or tracts of land, of, or from the Indians within this Province, without special Order and Authority to him and them given by the Governor and Commissioner." The intent of this law was to protect the Indians from too harsh treatment at the hands of cunning entrepreneurs by having the details of all transaction submitted for the approval of the Governor and Commissioners.

The first Indian purchase of Hunterdon County land was made in 1688, the last in 1758. The more important purchases were those of David Coxe in the southern part, the Lotting purchase in 1703 of lands laying on both sides of the South Branch of the Raritan, the Lewis Morris purchase about 1710 of 100,000 acres along the northern border, and the Willock's Purchase in 1709 of about 18,000 acres between Holland's Brook, Cushetunk Mountain and Alamatunk (Pottersville).

There exist three interesting manuscripts concerning the Willocks purchase. The warrant from Lieutenant-Governor Ingoldsby and the deed from Metamisco and Wataminian are preserved in the Office of the Secretary of the State in Trenton. The most interesting document, however, and one that has come to light and been identified only recently, is Willocks' account of expenses in making the purchases. This was prepared in 1716 to share the cost of the original purchase with James Logan and John Budd who in that year succeeded to one-half of the tract.

The transcript follows on the next pages.

#### WILLOCKS' INDIAN PURCHASE

A tract of land in the Western Division of New Jersey lying to the Westward of the Plantations of the Eastern Division of sd Province upon the Branches of Raritan

#### <u>Dr</u>

1708 November 17th

To Coll Ingoldsby for two Licenses one to myself and wife and the other to John Rudyard Secretary Bass for Porders thereon	£6-0-0
Licenses and Recording	2-16-0
1709 8 br Treating the Indians at Corse Vromes 11 <sup>th</sup> 12 & 13 when I agreed with them	2-3-10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Hoopers Negroes for my own two & Thomas Horse pasturing	4-6
Cash & Goods pd the Indians Viz:	
Cash	8-0-0
6 white Blankets at 20/	6-0-0
5 stroud water coates at 40/	10-0-0
3 Kerzie coates making & Furniture at	
£1-11-6	4-4-6
1 made Coat promised & Given privately to	
Metamisco ye Indian who managed the sale	е
for the rest	2-0-0
18 yards of Blew duffell at 7/6	6/15/0
5 Brass Kettles at 20/	5-0-0
3 Gunes at 35/	5-5-0
2 pistols afterwards bought of pretending	
they could not be got	2-4-0
11 shirts Thread & making at 6/	3-6-0
15 pair of Hose at 3/3	2-8-3
16 Hatchets at 3/	2-8-0
16 Broad Hones at 4/6	3-12-6
a Cask of Gun Powder	1-15-0
22 Barres of Lead at 9 <sup>d</sup>	16-6
40 Knives at 8d	1-6-8
a Cask of Rumm	2-0-0
a Barrell of Cyder	10-0
a Coat of my own to the Indian that Showed	
the Line 30/ and pd to Corse for Cloath	4 40 0
to make him stockings 9/	1-19-0
Thomas Folks for attending and Interpreting	3-0-0

0.31	Corss Vrom for his expense	0-12-0
1708 Nove		-
	My own Expense about ye aforesaid Purchas	S
	Going to Burlington for Licences 5 days for	4 40 0
4=00 Teelee	Expense	1-10-0
1709 July		
	Looking upon the Land and finding out the	
	Owners in Order to be treated with Expense	1-10-0
Augt	An other jurney To Thomas Folkes House &	
	w <sup>th</sup> him to the Sea Side to treat w <sup>th</sup> one	
	of the Indians then there 6 days	1-4-0
	Going to N:York to by the Goods w <sup>th</sup>	
	& being 5 days	1-13-0
	Victuall ye Indians at my house being very	
	numerous when the Goods were pd	12-0
9 <sup>th</sup> 14 <sup>th</sup>	pd Coll Cox for graving the returns of the	
	Licences	-12-0
	the Sectry for recording	6-0
	Interest of the above Sume being £92-03-3 ½	/2
	at 8 percent is near 7 years	51-17-3
~ .		£158-9-6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Surveying	Charges from May 28 to June 8 <sup>th</sup>	
In the year	1716	
To	Thomas Folkes— 3-0-0	
	Ad: Lane1-10-0	
	Cash at Traphagens 1- 5-0	

Beside Provisions Carried w<sup>th</sup> me & my own trouble & a servant to all the time

There are several points in the account worth noting. Corse Vroom lived in Somerset County at the confluence of the North Branch and South Branch of the Raritan, probably the white habitation closest to the purchase. Note particularly the secret deal with the Indian who managed the sale. A bit of deceit is acknowledged in the manner the pistols were promised, but, resorting to a pretext, not delivered.

Paying an Indian to show the line implies that the Indian groups did possess distinct tracts. "Finding out the owners" says the same thing,

but explicitly. It was apparently a collective ownership, since one or two Indians "managed the sale for the rest." Possibly in the number of certain items paid lies a clue to the number of adults (or male adults) then living on the tract.

Indians are known to have traveled to the seashore in the summer to fish and dig clams. Apparently Metamisco or Wataminian spent summers at the sea side.

Adrian Lane was probably the first settler of Readington Village. From the above account, it would seem he may have arrived between 1709 and 1716. By 1717, he had erected a mill on Holland's Brook. (The Indians call this brook Amenmechunk. The present name has been in use at least since 1688, and it is interesting to note that a lot bordering the brook was sold by Thomas Holland to Andrew Hamilton in 1687.)

In the year 1664, the English decided to seize New Netherland, which they held to be rightfully theirs, from the Dutch. In the mind of King Charles II, the deed once projected became an accomplished fact. This is made apparent by his granting to his brother James, Duke of York, all of the territory lying between the Delaware and the Connecticut Rivers in March, five months before the actual seizure was effected.

On June 24, 1664, still two months before the English takeover, the Duke presented the land now the State of New Jersey to Sir John Berkeley and Sir George Carteret. With this conveyance passed the last royal title to lands in New Jersey, thus making Berkeley and Carteret the only non-royal recipients of royal grants in this state. (The frequently-heard reference to individual farms having been devised by royal grant are in error. The error most likely arises from the careless reading of the old parchment deed, of which a typical beginning might be: "THIS INDENTURE made in the fourteenth year of the reign of our gracious sovereign, GEORGE the SECOND". Reference to the reign is made only by way of dating the instrument. The grantor whose name appears at the lower right will be every bit as much a commoner as the grantee.)

Ten years later, the joint, undivided proprietorship of Berkeley was sold to John Fenwick, "in trust for the use of Edward Byllynge." "Undivided" meant that the land was not divided between the owners, but rather that they shared the joint ownership of the whole. Byllynge, being in severe financial difficulties, turned over the management of the affairs of the "whole undivided half" of New Jersey to William Penn and two other Quakers. An agreement was reached between Byllynge and his trustees and Sir George Carteret on July 1, 1676, by which New Jersey was divided into East Jersey and West

Jersey. Byllynge and the Trustees thus became the owners of a 4,600 square mile tract lying to the westward of the partition line. The right of the Quaker proprietors to govern their colony was granted in 1680.

Next, the Trustees formed a stock company of one hundred shares or proprieties. Each share represented ownership of 1/100 of the nearly 3,000,000 acres in the province of West Jersey. Shares were valued at £350 each in the beginning. They were sold as whole and as fractional shares. In most cases, from two to eight persons joined in the purchase of a propriety. Of 120-odd known purchasers during the early period all but one were Quakers and all, with the exception of seventeen Irishmen and three Scots, were Englishmen.

Most of the proprietors sold off their holdings quickly as land dividends were awarded them. The large proprietor often found it profitable to dispose of this interest in fractional lots, since prospective settlers were not interested in thousands of acres. Owners of fractional proprieties often held an eighth, a sixteenth, a thirty-second or sixty-fourth. Often they held such shares only long enough to receive single dividends, which, at most, would be a few hundred acres each. On these they might settle, or they might sell to other settlers. Dividends on fractional shares thus often became individual farms or small estates.

The first dividend in West Jersey, by which holders of shares in the undivided whole could secure to themselves title to particular tracts, was authorized in 1681. A dividend of 5,200 acres per share was declared, but only 3,200 acres was to be allowed in the first "taking", all of this being below the Falls at Trenton. The second "taking" of the remaining 2,000 acres was authorized in 1683 and included land above the Falls. The third "taking" of land on the basis of 5,000 acres per share was made in 1708 and was considered as the second general dividend. Most of the original titles to Hunterdon lands were secured under the second and third takings. Most of the land in Hunterdon was taken up in large tracts and later reduced to farmsteads by division and sale. Typical early farm prices were £5 to £10 per one hundred acres.

Later declaration of dividends probably had little or no effect on Hunterdon, since all or nearly all of its land had already been taken up.

With the declaring of the land dividend and division of large tracts into farmsteads, the settlement of the country began and soon transformed the primeval wilderness into the energetic agricultural colony. To illustrate the rapidity of this transformation, consider the statement of George Fox, the Quaker divine who passed through the colony in 1679, "Then we had that great wilderness to pass through,

since called West Jersey, not then inhabited by English." And a journal entry by the Labadist envoy, Jasper Danckaerts, on his arrival at the Falls of the Delaware (Trenton) on November 17, 1679, "The falls could be made navigable on one side. As no Europeans live above the falls, they may so remain." He was spending the night at the house of Mahlon Stacy who had already erected a mill on the Assanpink. Danckaerts also noted that "Quakers live hereabouts in great numbers and daily increase." He, apparently, even while witnessing the rate of settlement, did not foresee the push up into present Hunterdon, which was soon to come.

In 1703, the proprietors, with a view to increasing their holdings, appointed John Reading, John Wills and William Biddle as their agents to treat with the Indians above the Falls. They purchased from Copponockus a 150,000 acre tract. Reading, then of Gloucester, must have been favorably impressed with the country, for in the following year he purchased a plantation near Stockton, which he named Mount Amwell after his home village in England.

Col. John Reading, father of Gov. John Reading, has been accorded the distinction of being the first settler of what is now Hunterdon County. Certain it is that he was one of the first. John Holcombe, in 1705 or shortly thereafter, settled in present Lambertville and was also among the earliest. Others followed, some from the southern part of the colony and some spreading north from Hopewell. Ferries were soon established at Stockton and Lambertville. By 1714 there were enough settlers in Amwell to form a company of militia.

Also within the first two decades, 1704-1724, settlers began arriving from the eastward by way of the Raritan and its tributaries. These were the Dutch, and included Hugenots and Wallons and perhaps Germans, all of whom through association and intermarriage had essentially become Dutchmen themselves. Settlements were made along Holland's Brook, along Campbell's Brook (Pleasant Run) and at Three Bridges. Readington Township, in fact, became so predominantly Dutch that it was later referred to as "an outpost of the large Dutch settlement of Somerset County."

Settlers from Monmouth, Burlington and further south were largely of English, Scotch, or Scotch-Irish extraction. English Baptist groups are said to have appeared on Spruce Run about 1738, at Baptistown in 1741 and Flemington by 1765. Quakers from Burlington County settled in the vicinity of Quakertown about 1730. English and Scotch Presbyterians lived near Ringoes and Mount Airy at an early date. Others resided in Kingwood and Bethlehem townships by about 1735 and at Mount Pleasant by 1750.

A new element in the settlement of Hunterdon made its appearance

between 1715 and 1720. In this interval then began a trickle of German settlers across the southern border. This was soon to become a torrent, so that Germans, by the mid-eighteenth century accounted for a large segment of Hunterdon's population. Toward the end of the 1720-1730 decade, Germans also began to appear in northern Readington and Lebanon Townships. These were members of a group of Palatines who had come to America in 1710 with Governor Robert Hunter. The purpose in bringing the Palatines was to produce naval stores in the pine forests of New York. After the collapse of the project, a group of these Germans settled in or near Franklin Township, Somerset County, before 1714. Chief among this group was one Balthasar (Baltes) Pickel, who for fifty years provided the civil and spiritual leadership of the community, even to the extent of building two churches at his own expense. By 1729 he had purchased a large tract west of Whitehouse and settled there. Others followed, probably attracted by the West Jersey Society's Great Tract nearby, on which they were able to lay out farms and build houses without any molestation by the absentee owners. Several years later, in 1735, the Society's agent, Lewis Morris, sent his son to enumerate the squatters on the tract and to induce them to sign leases. He found ninety-eight families, among whom were many Germans. He apparently had no difficulty in persuading the people to sign the leases, though later owners of the tract, meeting resistance when about the same business in 1755, made an example of a German family who had barred doors and windows at their approach. They removed the contents of the house, leveled the house and barn, and drove the family off the tract. All of the others signed with no further resistance.

A tradition exists that places German settlers in the northern part of the county about twenty years before they actually arrived. This is the account of a band of German emigrants bound for New York, whose ship was blown off course and landed in Philadelphia. Undaunted, this band set out overland to reach its intended destination, but were so taken by German Valley that they there stopped and stayed. This story has been traced to its source and found to be a traditional account given to one Franz Loher by descendants of some of the storied band and published by him in German in 1847. Historians considered this account apocryphal, at best a distorted version of the true story of the 1710 tar emigration.

Within a few years, the German tide from the South had joined that from the east, and together they and their descendents crossed into Morris, Warren and Sussex Counties. It has been estimated that by 1790, one-third of the population of Hunterdon, Morris and Somerset was German. In 1694, it was enacted by the Governor, Council and Representatives of West Jersey "that all Personas inhabiting in

this province above the River Derwent (Assanpink), being the Northern Boundary of the County of Burlington) shall belong and be Subject to the Jurisdiction of the Court of Burlington, until further Order of the General Assembly." By the County Act of 1710 the northern boundary of Burlington County was made the "northernmost and uttermost bounds" of the township of Amwell. Oscar M. Voorhees, in his Exterior and Interior Bounds of Hunterdon County, quotes the royal patent setting off the township of Amwell in 1708 and ventures the opinion that the northern border of Amwell was the northern boundary of present Delaware and Raritan townships, extended to Lamington Falls above Pottersville. Evidence against this is the 1711 return of the survey of the West Jersey's Society's Great Tract that locates the tract as "Situate and being in the County of Burlington." This 100.000-acre tract included parts of Franklin, Readington and Tewksbury and all of Lebanon, Clinton, Bethlehem, Union, Alexandria and Holland Townships. Thus, though some vagueness remains, it is certain that present Hunterdon lay entirely in Burlington County prior to 1714.

The journey to Burlington was an exceedingly arduous one, which fact prompted the inhabitants of Maidenhead to hold, on January 1, 1712, a Town meeting "to endeavor for the promoting of a County in the upper part of the Province." Subscriptions for the financing of the project are recorded in the Maidenhead Town Book and ranged from two pounds downward. Perhaps it was a result of this meeting that a petition to this effect was circulated and submitted to the Governor and Council. A bill was prepared and given its first reading before the council on January 26, 1713/14 [see Schmidt introduction, page iii.]. This was amended and resubmitted by a committee headed by John Reading. It became law on March 11, 1713/14. The bounds of the County as then erected included present day Sussex, Warren, and Morris Counties and a portion of Mercer County.

The name of the new County, Hunterdon, obviously honors Governor Hunter, probably being taken from the name of his old-world home, Hunterston, rather than being merely the addition of a suffix to his surname.

Following is a transcript of the act creating Hunterdon County:

#### An Act for Erecting the Upper Parts of the Western Division of New Jersey into a County

Whereas the Inhabitants of the upper parts of the said Western-Division, have, by their Petition, set forth, That for many years last past their frequent attending the several Courts held in Burlington being at a very great distance from most of their Habitations, Inconvenient and troublesom, as well as chargeable to the Inhabitants of the said Upper parts of the Western-Division, aforesaid, and to the great Detriment and Damage of the said Inhabitants. For the Removing of which Inconviencys, and making of the said People more easie for the time to come, it is Humbly proposed and pray – that it may be Enacted.

And be it Enacted by the Governor, Council and General Assembly, and by the Authority of the same, That all and singular the Lands, and upper parts of the said Western-Division of the Province of New Jersey, lying northwards of or situate above the Brook or Rivolet, commonly called Assunpink, be erected into a County, and it is hereby Erected into a County, Named, and from henceforth to be called, The County of Hunterdon; and the said Brook or Rivolet, commonly known and called by the Name of Assunpink, shall be the Boundry Line between the County of Burlington, and the said County of Hunterdon.

And be it Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said County of Hunterdon shall have and enjoy all the Jurisdictions, Powers, Rights, Liberties, Privileges and Immunities whatsoever, which any other County within the said Province of New Jersey doth, may or ought of Right to Enjoy, excepting only the choice of Members, to Represent the said County of Hunterdon, in General Assembly, which liberty is hereby suspended until Her Majesties Pleasure be further known therein, or that it shall be otherwise ordered by Act of Assembly.

And be it further Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That until such time that the said County of Hunterdon shall be allowed the Priviledge of chusing Representatives of their own to serve in General Assembly, it shall and may be lawful to and for the Free-holders of the said County (being qualified according to law) from time to time, as occassion shall be, to appear at Burlington, or elsewhere in the said County of Burlington, and there to vote and help to elect and chuse Representatives for the said County of Burlington, after the same manner as formerly, before the making of this Act, they were accustomed to do; and their said Votes shall be as good, and of the same validity and effect, as if the Person so Voting were properly Freeholders of the said County of Burlington, any Law, Custom usage to the contrary thereof not withstanding.

And be it Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all Taxes

and Arrearages of such Taxes, that are already laid by Acts of General Assembly of this Province, which are all ready assessed or that are hereafter to be assessed, whall be assessed, collected, and paid according to the Directions of the said Acts formerly past for that purpose, and that all Persons concerned therein shall be under the same Restrictions and Penalties as are exprest in the said Acts, in all Intents, Constructions and purposes, as if this Act had never been past.

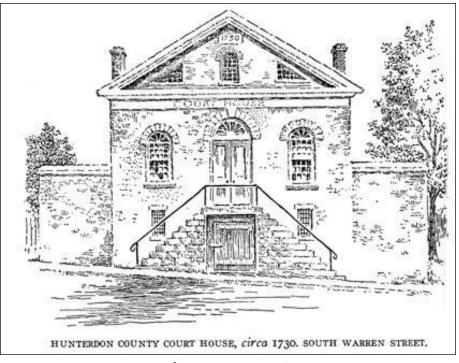


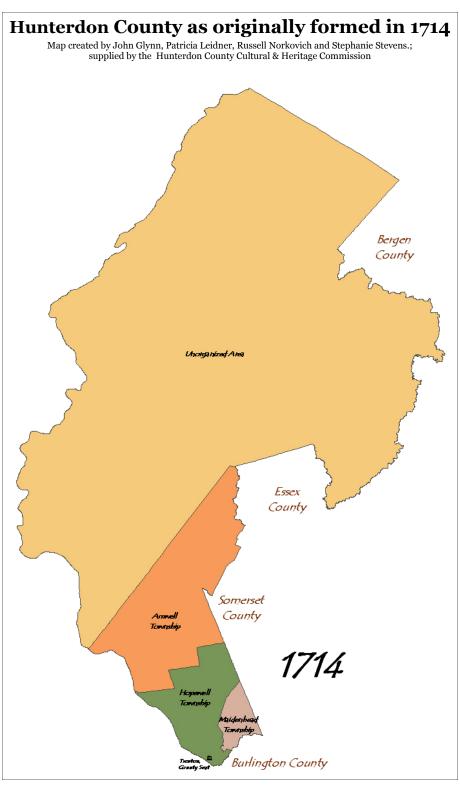
Image from www.trenton1784.org.

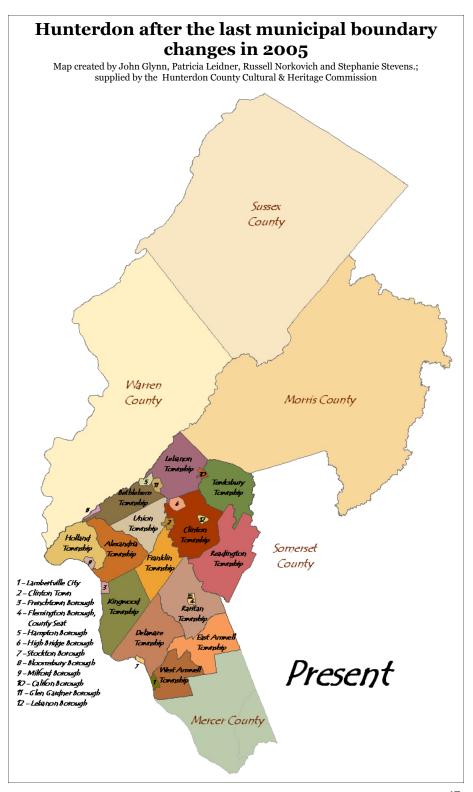
#### Admonishment to Voters from the Brunswick Gazette, New Brunswick, NJ August 15, 1790

To the Electors of Alexandria, Kingwood, Bethlehem, Lebanon, Tewksberry, Readington and Amwell, in Hunterdon County, NJ

Gentlemen,

The ensuing election is just approaching and near at hand when you are agreeable to an act of the Legislature, to say, where your property is to be laid out in building a Court-House for your Tounty, if you are unanimous for the centre of the Tounty, you may have it there, now is your time to be honest once to yourselves and your neighbors, if you would wish to place it where it really ought to be, be stanch for Flemington, it undoubtedly is as near the centre as it can be placed, many for selfish views and indeed for those very views many of the people in the lower end of the County recommend Buskarks, Bonnells, Pittstown, Quaker town, White house, and from the lower end of the County in order to Sessen the centre, recommends those places - when they the electors of Trenton, Hopewell and Maidenhead will be as one, stand firm to each other and finally place it at Trenton the place of its former stranding - you Gentlemen, are seven to three, you can as one say Flemingtown, this you will allow is near the centre and as near as it can be, and there it will suit you all, but if for your own reasons your votes are for so many different places, be assured at Trenton the house will be built; therefore, be wise, turn out to a man at your election, and there honestly and judiciously endeavour for Flemingtown.







The Hunterdon County Court House on Main Street, at left above, was erected in 1791 after voters chose Flemington as the county seat. The building burned in February of 1828. It was replaced at a cost of \$13, 513.86 and reoccupied that May. Restoration of the courthouse was completed in 2000; it is now used only ceremonially. The Hall of Records, at the right, was built in the 1870s and is still in use. It, too, has been restored. Photo from cardcow.com

Hunterdon's newest courthouse (below), called the Justice Center, at 65 Park Avenue cost \$19.6 million to build. It was first occupied in 1996.

Photo from boroconstruction.com



## County Government, 1964 By Kenneth V. Myers



Ounty government in New Jersey is organized around the semi-legislative Board of Chosen Freeholders, the elected administrative officials of the county. The term Freeholder, as applied to a county official, is derived from a practice in medieval England. There a freeholder was a person who held certain rights in real property. Only freeholders were eligible for membership on the county governing body. This conception followed the English to the shores of New Jersey, and the county governmental body became known as the Board of Justices and Chosen Freeholders. The justices of peace who joined with the chosen freeholders in forming the Board, were appointed rather than elected by the popular vote, as were the two freeholders chosen from each municipality in the county. The legislature in 1798 abolished the Board as so constituted. A Board of Chosen Freeholders composed of one elected representative from each municipality in the county assumed the powers and jurisdiction of the old Board of Justices and Chosen Freeholders. The property qualification was later dropped, but the title was continued. In 1902, permissive state legislation allowed a county to change the composition of its Board of Chosen Freeholders from one member representing each town and township to that of from three to nine elected members from the county at large.

Hunterdon County has been governed by the above forms of county government during the 250 years of its existence. Among the men of distinction that have served as Hunterdon's Freeholders and Justices are William Trent, for whom Trenton is named; Philip Ringo, early trader and settler in Amwell Township; Col. John Mehelm, Col. Thomas Lowry, Col. Abraham Bonnell, Col. John Taylor, General Daniel Bray, Col. Isaac Smith, Col. David Schomp of Revolutionary War fame; John Hart, signer of the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Senator John Lambert and Dr. Samuel Lilly.

The minutes of the Board of Justices and Chosen Freeholders of Hunterdon County begin with the May, 1739, meeting as recorded in a leather-bound volume, and are continuous down to the present date. Much of the information recorded there reflects the condition of affairs and the thinking of the people of Hunterdon through the years. In the beginning the Board met once a year in May in the courthouse. Occasionally, a special meeting would be called at another place. The notification of meetings was quite a chore, as can be seen by the clerk's bill for notifying the members of a meeting in 1739, which involved a man and a horse for two days. When not meeting in the courthouse, the Board generally met at a tavern convenient to the location requiring the attention, such as a bridge site. Perhaps this accounts for one of the rules of order which was adopted at each annual meeting in the early days of the Board; "There should be no spiritous liquor called in the room but by order of the director."

The early freeholders served without pay, which they "looked upon as a grievance," so they ordered in 1792 that the sum of 7 shillings 6 pence per meeting be allowed for expenses for each member in attendance. Testifying to the hardiness of these early officials is a note in the minutes that the Board adjourned on May 10, 1798, "to meet at 5 o'clock tomorrow morning". On May 11, 1798, the Board met and the first order of business was to propose prosecution of Henry Traphagen if he should still have money in his hands as battalion treasurer of Col. John Taylor's regiment.

The first courthouse, with a goal [jail] attached for the county, was located in the center of Trenton. It was supposedly built about 1720. That its care may have been neglected at times seems likely, for on May 15, 1746, the Freeholders examined the 1739 schedule "of sundry things which were formerly ordered to be done." As a result, they now ordered as follows: "the privy house be covered, the well be put in order, there be built a platform for the prisoners to lodge on in the common prison room." The maintenance of the jail was a constant and important part of the early Freeholders' work.

Crimes then were not always what we would consider serious, even though the punishment could be called serious. The Hunterdon County court records show on March 6, 1722, the following entry, "an indictment brought into Court against John Lewis Lawbower for cursing the King – said Louis appears and submits to the Court. Rather than contend with the King, ye said Louis pleads guilty. The judgment of the court is that Louis receive fifteen lashes on the bare back. And the oath be tendered him and if he refused taking the oath that he shall find security for his good behavior and stand committed till he find same." In May 1755 a pair of stocks and a pillory were ordered built near the Courthouse. Again in 1773, Abraham Hunt, Clerk of the Board was authorized to make necessary repairs to the jail and to get a new pair of stocks, a post and a pillory.

Crimes infrequently involved capital punishment. In 1755 High Sheriff Benjamin Biles produced an account against the county as a charge for the execution of Crow and Chester. They (justices and freeholders) did not think it proper to allow the charge for the execution of said Crow and Chester. A later sheriff, John Anderson, fared little better when his bill was presented in May, 1794, for the execution of James Vannetta for murdering James Field in Alexandria. The sheriff's bill for hanging was laid over to see if he had received his fee from the estate of Vannetta.

Another capital punishment by hanging was recorded in Hunterdon County for a slave called Brown, who was convicted of killing a fellow slave in his master's kitchen in 1803. The last hanging in 1828 was that of James Guild, a 14-year-old Negro who had murdered his mistress, Mrs. Beaks in Hopewell. "Little Jim," as he was commonly known, was convicted and hanged before a large crowd on a scaffold near where the Reading Academy was later built. [2014 note: An empty field back then, the Reading Academy was later built there and was Flemington's only public school from 1862-1915; the site is now the Bonnell Street entrance of the Reading-Fleming Intermediate School.]

One of the most sensational trials of the county also involved capital punishment by hanging. In March, 1907, Governor Stokes signed a bill outlawing hanging in New Jersey as the penalty for first degree murder and substituting electrocution. But in January of that year John Schuyler in Califon had committed murder in the first degree, according to the finding of a jury in April, and was sentenced to die on the scaffold on June 28, 1907. The trial attracted state-wide attention for it looked as if New Jersey might have its last hanging in Flemington. Hunterdon officials borrowed a scaffold from Mercer County for the purpose and were getting prepared to use it when the execution was stayed. The penalty was later commuted on appeal.

Not until January 2, 1935, had Hunterdon County witnessed such a dramatic murder trial as engaged world-wide attention before Justice Thomas W. Trenchard in the century-old courtroom at Flemington. Here Bruno R. Hauptman was tried for the crime of the fatal kidnapping of the son of Col. Charles Lindbergh from his Sourland Mountain home. The trial reportedly cost all parties concerned over a million dollars. Hundreds of reporters and photographers swarmed through the town and, needless to say, much unfair and unwanted publicity came to Hunterdon. Hauptmann was found guilty, and was electrocuted.

In providing the facilities for the judiciary and the jail in this county, the Freeholders have frequently shown concern for the cost of these items. In 1817 four prisoners' fines were remitted and they were released "to save the County expense." In 1819 a committee of Freeholders waited on the Court to acquaint them of the great expense the county was put to in housing criminals, and requested them to use caution as to jail sentences." When the judges of the Court of Common Pleas petitioned the Freeholders to cushion the judges' chairs upon the bench, the petition was received, read and tabled. There was no evidence of sympathy for the judges' dilemma. Once when, as the result of an inspection of the jail by a County grand jury panel, it was recommended to the Board that a wood-working shop should be attached to the jail for the 7 inmates to use, the Board responded by saving that this recommendation was unnecessary and that the prisoners would be given firewood to work up. In 1883, another type of jail expense troubled the Board, which therefore passed a resolution, "Whereas large amounts of money that are being expended by the County for Committment and boarding of the tramps that infest the County are becoming burdensome to the tax-payers of the County. Be it resolved the Board refuse to pay any bills for committments or boarding of tramps." In 1884, the sheriff was instructed to purchase a pair of shoes for a prisoner in jail and turn him out and purchase a ticket for him for Peekskill, N.Y. Needless to say, the tramp problem was not easily solved, since the railroad freight trains afforded an excellent means for urban hoboes hitching rides to the county, there to impose on the good nature of the local citizenry until they finally landed in the County jail as vagrants. For many years the minutes disclose a running battle with "the tramp." Eventually, the building up of the area made it less attractive to vagrants, and the era of the tramp with a sack on his back, begging for a handout at the back door, passed from the scene.

The seat of government remained in Trenton until an act of the N.J. Legislature on March 21, 1780, enabled the Board to meet at Henry Mershon's tayern, earlier John Ringo's in Amwell . . . reportedly because of its convenience to the County's inhabitants. The Board did not again hold its annual meeting at the courthouse in Trenton. In 1801 the Boards' Attorney, Richard Stockton, advised the ejection of its tenants and the selling of the old courthouse. The sale was made to Trenton Banking Company in 1805 for \$2,055.00. That the people of Trenton area were not pleased by this shift was shown at a meeting of the Board in Flemington on January 3, 1791, when a question was raised as to whether such a meeting was in fact legal. A voice vote decided that it was. Then the Board proceeded to vote on appropriation of 2,500 pounds to be raised by direct taxation and appointed Col. John Taylor, Col. William Chamberlain and John Snyder to draft a plan for a "Courthouse and goal to be located at Flemington." It is noteworthy that no Freeholders from Trenton, Maidenhead or Hopewell townships were present at the next meeting on January 27, 1791. At this meeting George Alexander offered to the Board free gratis a half-acre of land as a building site. The gift did have a string attached to it, however, for the Freeholders were obliged later to settle with Susanna Smith, who had right of dower in the land.

The plans finally approved for the courthouse were for a two-story building, 60 feet by 35 feet, with a height of nine feet for the first story, 14 feet for the second. The first mention of the use of this building was on May 9, 1792, when P. Wrighter billed the County for 11 pounds, 9 shillings for "1 cord of wood and candles supplied the supreme court, rations for prisoners and expense of moving a prisoner from Trenton to Flemington to the new jail." The nature of the early jail cell appears in the order for repair spelled out in Freeholder minutes in 1798. "Floor of the criminal cell be taken up and stone walls mended where broke, all sleepers hewed and whole vacancy filled tight with ten-inch white oak timbers and covered with 2" thick white oak planks and same to be covered with boards to be plowed and grooved, the whole floor to be spiked down and the door of said room to be lined with thick sheet iron on the outside, the same wall riveted on, the dungeon door to be completed in the same manner and a sufficient lock to be put on the same door."

The courthouse was burned on February 13, 1828. The prisoners were transferred to the Somerset County jail, and the Legislature authorized the courts to meet in the Flemington Methodist Church, until a courtroom could be built. A special meeting of the Board of Freeholders' was held on March 10, 1828 to decide on a course of action. The Board proceeded to business and appointed a committee of five to inquire and report what was necessary to be done. Its report was not agreed to, however, and a second committee was then appointed by dropping one member and adding two more. This committee recommended as follows:

- 1. That it was not expedient to repair the old building but better to build a new one.
- 2. That the jail should be erected on the rear of the main building by making the yard wall part of the building.
- 3. That the Stone materials of the old building be used for the erection of the jail, leaving the walls of sufficient height for the foundation of the new building.
- 4. That the new building be constructed of bricks.
- 5. That a committee be appointed to visit other courthouses and to look over plans suggested by individuals, then to choose a plan that for economy and convenience would be most suitable.

The Board accepted this report and named committees to view the county courthouses of Warren, Monmouth and Morris counties in New Jersey and Bucks County in Pennsylvania. The Board adjourned until April 3rd. It then appointed a committee to confer with Mr. Bonnell respecting a donation of land to extend the jail yard. Another committee was appointed to report such a building plan as they felt best for the purpose intended, without having regard to the previous committee report. This committee reported in the afternoon that they had carefully examined all the plans submitted to them and recommended the one presented by a Mr. Saxton, with some alterations. The building was to be 50 feet wide and 70 feet deep exclusive a "portice calonade." There were to be four columns the height of the body of the building. The jail and rooms for the keeper were to be on the first story, the courtroom on the second and the grand jury room in the attic. The first story was to be ten feet in height and the second sixteen. A cellar would be put under that part that the jailer was to occupy. The portico was to be ten feet wide, provided that the architect approved. The front part of the building would be composed of one-third brick and the remaining stone. The committee to confer with Mr. Charles Bonnell reported that he agreed to give a lot of land 70 feet square at the back of the jail vard. The building committee was instructed to meet every month to examine the accounts and draw the necessary money.

On March 6, 1829, the Board met to ascertain what the building had already cost and consider the propriety of continuing or discharging the building committee. A committee named to view the new building, and to ascertain the probable cost of completing it, found that the covering on the pillars in front of the building was shelling off, and recommended that it be taken off and replaced, and that suitable persons be employed to plaster and paint the building. Thomas Capner was named a committee of one to superintend the completing of the building.

On December 16, 1829, the committee reported that the building had cost \$13,513.86 to date. The jail was, of course, much smaller than today. It was rebuilt in its present state in 1925, giving space for a jail warden's apartment, an office and accommodations for 30 male and 5 female prisoners.

The importance of protecting public documents was already apparent in 1806. A committee of the Board was authorized to build a fire-proof office for the security of papers of the County Clerk and Surrogate. This building was reported as completed in 1807. New furnishings were purchased for the Clerk as follows: 1 seal and press, 2 tables, 1 writing desk, 2 candlesticks, 2 pair snuffers, 6 ink stands, 6 chairs. The vault was enlarged in the County Clerk's office in 1841,

and some other improvements made. The interest of the Board apparently did not extend to the County Clerk's comfort, for in 1858 a motion was passed to rescind a previous action in which it was agreed to furnish the fuel for the office of the Clerk and Surrogate. In 1870, the Clerk's office was again remodeled at a cost not to exceed \$8,000.00, and again in 1928 contracts were awarded for modernizing the Clerk's and Surrogate's Office at a cost of \$75,000.00.

With the growth of the county, a building to house administrative offices was found necessary, and so, despite an unfavorable referendum vote in 1956, the Board in 1961 demolished the house next to the Hall of Records, making way for the construction of the present office building at a cost of \$400,000.00. Other important changes in the county buildings include the purchase of a building and lot on Church Street, Flemington for a central garage for the service of county road equipment, and the purchase and remodeling of a building on Spring Street in Flemington for the housing of the county library, which had from its inception been situated in the courthouse. The latest addition has been the construction of a building on Route 69 [overnight in 1967 renamed Route 31] where the various agricultural agencies are presently housed. [Moved to an administrative complex by the Route 12 Library in 2000, and to a Main Street Administrative Building in 2003.]

Interesting sidelights on the county buildings are quite indicative of the periods of time through which the buildings passed. For instance, permission was granted by the Freeholders on May 13, 1813, to the Flemington Acqueduct Company to erect a trough for the public to water horses, cattle, etc., and permission was also given to construct a cistern. How long the trough was in use is not known, but the need still continued, for in 1901 the Flemington Women's Club was granted permission to install the present granite drinking fountain in front of the courthouse "for the convenience of man and beast." A motion to light the courthouse with gas was voted down in 1859 and also in 1860. This method was eventually installed and then replaced by electric lights in 1894, then later replaced by gas, which held sway until 1927, when the courthouse resumed the electric lighting. Steam heating was placed in the courthouse in 1893. But Flemington was still pretty rural, for in that same year Howard Lake rented the pasture lot back of the courthouse for \$25.00 per year. In 1892 the Rev. George S. Mott appeared before the Board to urge a separation of male and female prisoners in the County Jail.

In July of 1867, the courthouse was voted a new slate roof and some "gingerbread" in the form of projections put on the cornice around the eaves. At the same time the installations of patent tops for the chimneys was provided for. From time to time, rearrangements of

offices and furnishings has gone on within the courthouse, but no basic change has been made in its appearance. One of the distinguishing features of the courthouse is the bell located in the cupola. It was installed with the building of the new courthouse and was used to announce the holding of court. The Freeholder minutes refer frequently to adjournment, to meet again "at the call of the bell". For some time the bell was out of commission, but John Lea, the present Sheriff [in 1964], has restored it into use by ringing it for the beginning sessions of court.

The finances of the Board of Chosen Freeholders at first were quite simple because the services rendered were modest. The minutes of 1748 reveal the tax collection procedure: "Several assessors of the County shall meet at the house of Philip Ringo on the fifteenth day of August next, in order to settle the several quotas for the townships of the County, and said assessors to deliver duplicates of their assessments to the several town collectors on or before the first day of September next, and the several town collectors collect the same on or before the second Tuesday in October next, and it is ordered the several assessors of the said County shall take into account the ratable estates before they meet to settle the several quotas of their townships and they lay their assessments according to the pound value of the ratable estates." It must be observed that from the early times to date, taxation of real estate in New Jersey provided the great source of revenue to support local government. While the basic system remained the same, there have doubtless been refinements from time to time. One of these occurred in 1910 when the Freeholders, for the first time, purchased uniform tax lists and duplicates for the taxing districts and furnished them to the several municipalities free of cost. This made for uniformity of records and ease of filing with the County Tax Board, where the file of books is complete back to 1913.

In Joseph Peace's account to the Board of the County's finances from 1734 to 1739, he shows tax collections as follows:

Maidenhead Township	£99/15/9
Hopewell Township	56/11/5
Amwell Township	130/12/1
Reading Township	99/13/2
Bethlehem Township	50/3/4
Lebanon Township	44/8/6
Hannover Township	126/14/11
Trenton Township	72/16/8

£ 681/5/10

The relative prosperity in the various townships is apparent.

An important part of the County's money in the days of Mr. Peace went for bounties on wolves and panthers (60 shillings for a wolf's head, 15 shillings for panthers.) This report showed that bounties were paid for 91 wolves and 16 panthers. The other expenditures shown were mostly for support of the courts, fees for the County officials, and upkeep for the jail. While these elementary services constituted the beginning of those the County provided its citizens, the record since is filled with a constant enlargment of the size and number of services.

By 1761 it was apparent that the Freeholders were involved in the building of bridges, for the records show that the overseer of roads in Trenton requested the Board to repair or rebuild the bridge over the Assunpink Creek. While the County assumed the responsibility for bridge building, it is apparent that voluntary self-help persisted. Frequently in the minutes in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is found this notation, "And the filling up of the buttments exclusive of mason work shall not be considered as a charge on the County but left for the neighborhood to complete." The building of bridges was an ever-increasing burden of the Board. In 1805, for instance, 16 new bridges were ordered built. On the other hand, the development of a County road system did not come until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Responsibility for roads, primarily, remained with the local townships.

Other responsibilities were soon assumed, such as the overall supervision of elections. In 1791, County Clerk Stockton was paid 12 pounds for making, lettering, painting and sending election boxes to the several townships. Nevertheless, elections continued to be conducted in a more or less loose fashion and at very little cost to the County. Then came the Election Reform Law of 1890, signed by Governor Leon Abbett, bringing a major change in voting methods and costs. A County Election Board was established and local district boards, consisting of four members, two from each major party together with prescribed registry books, lists and booths. The Freeholders estimated that it increased costs of elections nearly twelve times.

It may be well at this time to speak of the modification of the Board of Chosen Freeholders itself. On November 2, 1902, an election was held in Hunterdon County under a permissive state law allowing reduction of Board size. In Hunterdon the membership would be reduced from 21 (one from each municipality) to three elected from the County at large. The annual salary of each Freeholder, including expenses, was to be \$1,500. The total costs of Freeholders salaries and expenses in the previous year had been \$9,415. The referendum carried, and the "small Board" was established in Hunterdon County, apparently the first county in the state to make such a move. The members of the first small Board were John H. DeMott of Raritan Township, John Duckworth of Union Township and Henry Sigafoos

of Holland Township.

A service new to the public of Hunterdon came into being on May 14, 1845, when Joseph Besson was appointed to do all things necessary to carry into effect within the limits of the County the Act entitled, "An Act to establish a uniform standard of Weights and Measures," passed by the legislature on March 13, 1844.

Welfare of needy individuals, so much the concern of the modern County budget, appeared to have its beginning in 1846, when a committee of five from the Board was appointed to investigate the case of John Fox, and any similar case that might be brought to its notice. The committee was given power to carry into effect the act of the legislature respecting idiots and lunatics, passed February 22, 1843. The interest of the Board in the mentally ill grew, and was the subject of discussion constantly in its meetings. In 1886 the Board passed a motion stating that the County had 72 patients in Morristown Asylum and wished the Belvidere-Delaware and the Morris and Essex Railroads to make some reduction in fares for those desiring to visit friends and relatives in the Asylum.

The next most important innovation in the area of welfare services was the appointment of the first County Welfare Board in 1932. The members were James Corcoran, Daniel Little, Sarah Skillman, Margaret C. Wagg and George Hawke. The first Director of Welfare was Mrs. Rose Z. Angell. At about this same time, in connection with the Freeholders' interest in crippled children and the public health programs, a portion of the so-called County Nurse's salary was underwritten by the Board. Freeholder Fred Massey represented the Board on the County Nursing Committee, and Ethel MacKenzie was the first nurse employed by this committee.

In 1887-88 the Board was raising by taxation the sum of \$85,000 to be spent according to the following estimated amounts.

Asylum \$15,000	Miscellaneous \$4,700
Bridges 22,000	Printing and Stationery 1.050
Court 13,000	Coroner and Taxes Costs 1,000
Freeholders 4,000	County School Superin1,500
	tendent and Examiners
Interests & Discounts 2,500	Election Expenses 700
Boarding of Prisoners 1,500	County Canvassers 100
Transportation of	Surplus 3,200
Prisoners 50	County Debt
	Total \$85,000

As can be seen, the major fields in which the Freeholders today find themselves providing services are represented in the various classifications of appropriation 75 years ago.

Notable exceptions to this statement would be the County Library and County Planning Board. The former was established by popular referendum on November 8, 1927. The first County Library Commission was composed of Mrs. C.E. Dickerson, Mrs. Daniel Little, Mrs. Ryman Herr, Egbert Thomas, Edward Lindeman, and, ex officio, Harry W. Moore, County Superintendent of Schools. The first County Librarian was Elizabeth Turner. The County Planning Board was first established by the Freeholders on April 2, 1957, with the following members: Ezra Wean, Chairman; Frank Curtis, Vice Chairman; Douglas Freeman, Secretary; Mrs. Harold Ellsworth, Judson Force, and Richard Stevenson. In 1959 a full-time planning staff was established under the direction of John S. Deffigos.

The regulation of paper money was to some extent a function of the Colonial Board of Justices and Chosen Freeholders, which had a close relationship with the provincial Loan Officers of the Colony, who reported annually to the Board. Loan Officers were first established in the Province of New Jersey in 1723, a commissioner being appointed for each County, at first by the Legislature and later by the Board of Justices and Chosen Freeholders. Three Commissioners were appointed, forming a corporate body. A specific amount of loan bills was apportioned to each county loan office. The money was then loaned for a period of years from 12 to 16 years at five percent on sound mortgage security, the interest and a portion of the principal to be returned on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March yearly. The last colonial loan bills was retired about 1752.

During the Confederation period, the State of New Jersey again had loan bills. In 1789, there was laid before the Board by the Loan Officers of the County, the sum of 605 pounds paper money by them received as principal paid during the last year. The mark required by the law was made thereon and they were forwarded to the State Treasurer. William Phillips, one of the Commissioners, was paid 1 pound, 10 shillings for delivery for the chest containing the money to Robeson's Tayern. That the State Treasurer sometimes received counterfeit paper money, is obvious, for it was noted in 1796 that several suspicious bills were returned as "being suspected of Counterfeit." It is further obvious that counterfeiting was a frequent offense, even though the paper money carried the inscription "To Counterfeit is Death," for in the next year, 1795, John Anderson, Sheriff, apprehended Philip Bevan and Eleazer Coffin for counterfeiting. Their fate is unknown. In any case, New Jersey as a state of the new Federal Union, soon got out of the paper money business.

The burdens that the local economy had to bear during and after the

American Revolution are shown in the Board minutes. No meeting was held during 1776 and 1777, according to the record; and that when the Board did meet in May of 1778, Joakim Griggs, County Collector, reported he had collected 2,045 pounds sterling from the various townships in 1776 and 1777 for the Sinking Fund Tax, which money he had turned over to the State Treasurer along with 469 pounds that he had collected from "tax exempts." Disaffected persons were sought after and prosecuted in the County, and fines from these individuals were collected by Mr. Griggs in the amount of 1,175 pounds, 14 shillings in 1778-1779. Some inkling of the presence and extent of inflation is shown by the County Collector's records. In 1780, he collected 126, 872 pounds, 18 shillings and a year later he collected 193,620 pounds from the several municipalities of the County. In 1780, John Welling billed the Board 2,000 pounds for two new doors and locks, four pairs of handcuffs, four leg hobbles and repairs made to the courthouse floor in front of the entrance. Ten years earlier the entire expenditure of the County, exclusive of the State Sinking Fund assessment, was 113 pounds.

The ravages of inflated money were everywhere apparent at this time. The County Collector reported to the Board in 1782 that he had been unable to collect 51,359 pounds, 16 shillings in delinquent taxes. At the same meeting there were signs of returning from the paper money spree, for the Board levied taxes of 310 pounds, *hard money* for repairs to the jail and courthouse and for other charges to be brought against the County. With the attempt to change the money standard, difficulties naturally ensued. A committee of the Freeholders headed by Thomas Lowry, inquiring into reported tax shortage in Tewksbury Township, found that municipality in arrears 190 pounds of state money and 305 pounds of hard money.

Many people were hurt by the troublesome economic ills of the time. The Board dealt sternly with those who owed it money. In 1794 Capt. Andrew Rieder reported to the Board that a judgment had been obtained for a reported shortage in the accounts of William Abbott and Joshua Corson, County Collectors, in the amount of 3,121 pounds, 11 shillings and 6 ½ pence. The property of the two gentlemen, consisting of shop goods, land, the house and lot where Corson lived, and two stills had been sold for a total of 506 pounds, leaving a balance still due of 2,615 pounds. It seemed the more unjust since Corson had been found short, in part at least, because of the changing values of money.

The office of Surrogate is an old one. The Provincial Governors had province-wide jurisdiction over the probate of wills and over granting letters of administration and letters of guardianship. To facilitate the

transaction of business, they appointed deputies called surrogates to act in their stead. Thus, at a very early date, the name Surrogate was applied to the office of Surrogate, as we know it today. This condition of affairs continued until about 1784, when an act was passed providing that the Ordinary or Surrogate-General should appoint one deputy or surrogate for each county. Later the appointment of surrogates was taken from the Ordinary and conferred upon the Council and General Assembly.

By the constitution of 1844, the Surrogate was made a constitutional officer elected by popular vote. This divorced him from his status as deputy and made him an independent officer, whose duties were fixed by the Legislature. The Surrogate's Office is thus an integral part of County government and plays an important part in the economic life of the community. It is the office in which all records pertaining to the settlement of estates are filed.

The Surrogate is the Judge of the Surrogate's Court, and, in admitting a will to probate, he acts in a judicial capacity. This means that the Surrogate-Judge has examined the paper submitted for probate and has adjudicated upon its propriety and validity, has sworn into office the Executor named in the will as the person to administer the estate, and has issued the necessary evidence of the fiduciary's authority. If a person dies intestate, the Surrogate grants administration and qualified the fiduciary, or Administrator, in the same manner. The probate of wills, the granting of administration, and the granting of guardianship constitute the three primary actions upon which the bulk of the work in the Surrogate's office is based.

The Hunterdon County office was established in 1804. The old records are a source of much interest to visitors and business people alike. The small, flowery, cramped and often illegible handwriting of the early days is indeed a contrast to the photostatic records of today. Wills and inventories of the early periods are fascinating because they reflect the mode of living of the times. Inventories once were numerous and contained such items as horses, buggies, firewood, cows, crops and such treasured belongings as hall clocks. Today few inventories are filed, and, when they are, they contain such items as cars, boats, stocks, bonds, antiques, cash, etc. The change reflects the modern trend of living.

The list of Surrogates serving the County from 1804 to 1964 contains the names of many well-known families of the area,viz: Robert J. Kilgore, Isaac J. Cramer, George F. Hansen, Obediah H. Sproul, Paul A. Queen, to name just a few. The present incumbent [in 1964], Mrs. Inez Prall, was the first woman in the State of New Jersey ever to be

elected to the office of Surrogate. Until November 1963, she was the only woman Surrogate in the State.

### County Government, 1989

update by Kenneth V. Myers

The annual County budget total for 1964 was \$2,200,000, while in 1989 it was \$36,500,000. The County's financial indebtedness went from zero to over \$40,000,000 in that same period. Greatly increased cost of material and wares contributed to the increase but obviously there was much more by way of new and expanded services provided by the County to its citizens.

The administration of County government, at one time a very minor part of the total budget, has grown in major proportions with much more professional participation. In 1977, the County upgraded its management of finances, formerly handled by the County Treasurer and Auditor, by establishing the office of County Controller and appointing Roland F. Hunter to fill the chair.

Overseeing employee relationships became somewhat more complex when the county employees were placed under "civil service" in 1951. Pensions were for the first time required for Hunterdon employees as a result of a referendum in 1965. This vote registered the County as the last remaining one in the State to provide such a benefit. The office of Personnel Director was created to better handle employee concerns in 1971. George Blessing was the first person to fill the job. Later his duties were assumed by the Clerk to the Freeholders.

Electrodata-processing in County operations started back in 1969 when the County Board of Taxation began preparing local tax collector and assessor records. In the same year jury selection, voter registration and payroll preparation were electronically set up by equipment in a local dairy office.

Providing buildings for county operations that had originally been confined to the Courthouse complex and road department garages took on a new dimension with the acquisition of the Hart Case farm of 56 acres on Route 12 for a cost of \$70,000 on October 15, 1968. On this tract the County Library was about to find a new home after having moved a couple of times from its original location in the Courthouse. On July 7, 1979, the Freeholders awarded a contract

totaling \$1,300,000 for the construction of the first building on the Case farm. Several years later the central road department building also was constructed there.

In 1974, the Agricultural Extension Services building on Route 31 was expanded to provide for additional office space and the old Hunterdon County Democrat building was acquired in 1975 to house the office of the County's first full-time Prosecutor, the late William O. Rittenhouse.

Law enforcement, a constantly increasing cost to the County, required an adequate jail facility and for many years Hunterdon's quarters were the subject of criticism. Finally, land was purchased on Park Avenue in the Borough of Flemington and the modern jail facility, planned in 1977, was completed in 1985 at a cost of \$5, 547,000.

Some services normally found at the local level of government have found their way to the County level in Hunterdon. Two instances of particular interest are that of Health and Public Safety. The County Health Department started with the Freeholder appointment of a nine-member County Advisory Board of Health in October, 1966. By April of the following year, a majority of Hunterdon's municipalities had opted for county services in this area and Dr. John M. Scruggs was employed as the first Director of the department. The case of public safety presented a more extensive problem. Around-the-clock dispatching of police, fire equipment and rescue squads in emergent need had by 1970 become a difficult situation for many communities in the county. In 1968, police chiefs from 15 different departments came before the Freeholder Board requesting the County to establish a radio communication center to accommodate local needs. Six or more dispatching services were serving the various police departments with little or no capability of inter-communicating. After much study on the part of the Freeholder Board, the 911 concept was established by resolution on October 15, 1974. Former Freeholder Kenneth V. Myers was engaged to coordinate and plan with an advisory committee a county-wide emergency communication system. On March 25, 1975, he introduced the first Director of the countywide radio emergency communications system, Alan Armitage, and announced that grants were in place from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and State and Federal Authorities totaling over one-half million dollars. By February 1, Mr. Armitage had the communications center in Cherryville operational with the first county-wide 911 system in the state.

Another area affecting local needs in which the County became involved was the purchasing of voting machines in 1975 to replace voting by paper ballots, a method that had been practiced for over a century. Very often new services were made available to the County's citizens by way of Federal "seed money," such as housing and transportation through the Office on Aging. The latter service was instituted in 1971 with Mary Housel becoming its first Director.

Agitation to preserve open space in the county has grown with the decline of farming. Far-sighted Lloyd Wescott and his wife Barbara paved the way to county ownership of parkland and open space by a donation of land in Delaware Township to the County for park purposes in 1969. The Freeholders moved further in the area of this concern by the appointment of the Advisory Committee on Parks and Open Space on December 9, 1969, consisting of the following seven members: Vincent Abraitys, Benjamin Cooley, Bernard F. Ramsburg, David Moore, Norman Pfleger, Robert Manners, and Chester Herder. Several parcels of land have been acquired for park purposes since the Wescott gift, the most important of which were the Lechner and Bloomer tracts and the South Branch Linear Park, all tending to preserve the South Branch of the Raritan in the Stanton Station area. Barry Locke became the first full-time Director of the Park System on April 1, 1975.

As the Board of Freeholders struggled with the ever-expanding needs of the ever-expanding population in the county, the cultural necessities of the community have not been overlooked. On May 14, 1974, the County Cultural & Heritage Commission was formed out of the existing Heritage Commission and its supplemental advisory art group, with the following persons being appointed Commissioners: Paul Haines, Frances Blomquist, Monroe DeMott, Mrs. Jessie Landon, Pauline Stothoff, Paul McCormick, John Krauss, Mary Buckwalter, and Anne Steele Marsh.

So swift and so extensive has been the growth of the County and its government in the past 25 years, that it has been impossible to record all the changes in this limited space. The complete records may be found in the Minutes of the Board of Freeholders in the custody of its Clerk and Administrator [in 1989], Dorothy Bertany.

## County Government 2014

update by Cynthia J. Yard

The last 24 years of County government leading up to the Tricentennial celebration (2014) have seen much growth in services, citizens served, the infrastructure and the additional expectations of our citizens for services that enhance the quality of life. This growth in all areas went full throttle until 2007 when not only the nation, but also every State, County and local government, was affected by the economic downturn.

The chart below demonstrates the cost of growth in County services: higher budgets, increased number of staff, population changes, and how the citizens were taxed as well as the County indebtedness since the last update in 1989. The interesting part of this chart is that after 2006 when the economy started to decline, the governing body responded by reducing the budget, the number of employees, the tax rate and the amount of real debt without compromising service delivery. The County departments reprioritized what services were delivered, and more importantly, how services were delivered, continuously looking for efficiencies.

The Cost of Growth in County Services

Year	Budget in mil- lions	# Empl.	Pop.	Tax Rate ea \$100 of real property	Real Debt in millions
1995	46.5	565	107,776	34.63 cents	47.7 Total bond & long -term debt prior to Green Acres
2000	63	594	121,987	40.09 cents	66.3 Bond 5.9 Green Acres
2006	93.4	657	130,783	29.84 cents	44.7 Bond 6.2 Green Acres
2013	88	540	127,351	30.20 cents	7.8 Bond

The continued desire for land preservation in Hunterdon County pinnacled in 1999 when the voters successfully passed a ballot question to levy a dedicated tax (up to 3 cents per \$100 of real property value) to preserve open space. These efforts have preserved 62,770 acres, 23 percent of Hunterdon County's total of 275,200 acres (480 square miles). That includes 28,812 acres of County farmland, 8,344



The view from Point Mountain overlook in northern Hunterdon, one of 26 parks preserved by the County for passive recreation like hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, hunting and picnicking. Photo from the County Division of Parks & Recreation

acres of County parkland, and 25,614 acres with State/County/Municipal/Non-profit funding.

The open space tax was put to the voters two more times in ballot questions in 2004 and 2009 and overwhelmingly passed by 75% of the voters. The dedicated tax has raised \$75.7 million since the initial ballot question, all collected through the County with a designated percentage shared with all municipalities and competitive grant awards available to non-profits.

In 1999, at the same time the open space tax was embraced by Hunterdon's voters, the governing body's political tide turned and the County's governing body went from a three- to a five-member board. The 1997 ballot question was not as overwhelmingly supported as the open space tax and squeaked by with 16,571 yes votes versus 15,337 no votes.

Noteworthy distinctions of Hunterdon County Freeholder Boards since 1989 include:

- The election of the first female Freeholder in its 286-year history: Lifelong Hunterdon resident Marcia A. Karrow, who later become a State Senator, sworn in January 1999
- The election in 2004 of a second female Freeholder,

- Nancy I. Pallidino
- Freeholder George B. Melick becoming the longest continuously serving Freeholder in New Jersey (1978-2013)
- Erik C. Peterson, elected Freeholder in 2006, went on to become a NJ State Legislator in 2009

#### Members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders serving since 1989

George D. Muller	term:	1/1/76 to 12/31/84
		1/1/99 to 12/31/06
George B. Melick	term:	1/1/78 to 12/31/13
Harrie E. Copeland	term:	1/1/85 to 12/31/90
Robert W. Anderson	term:	1/1/86 to 12/31/91
Frank J. Fuzo	term:	1/1/91 to 12/31/05
Paul C. Sauerland	term:	1/1/92 to 12/31/03
Marcia A. Karrow	term:	1/1/99 to 12/31/06
Nancy I. Palladino	term:	1/1/04 to 12/31/06
Erik C. Peterson	term:	1/1/06 to 12/7/09
J. Matthew Holt	term:	1/1/07 to present
Ronald M. Sworen	term:	1/1/07 to 12/31/12
William G. Mennen	term:	1/1/08 to 12/31/13
Robert G. Walton	term:	12/15/09 to present
John King	term:	1/1/13 to present
Suzanne Lagay	term:	1/1/14 to present
John Lanza	term:	1/1/14 to present

The County's infrastructure also grew during this time period. Between new construction and renovations, expanded public services found new or improved locations in the County's inventory of buildings:

	novation (R) Construction		Sq.ft/ Acreage
Echo Hill Lodge	R/addition	early 1990s	2,800 sf
Justice Center	N	1996	115,000 sf
North Branch Library (Clinton)	N	1999	22,000 sf
Historic Court House	R	1999/2003	23,000 sf
Heron Glen Public Golf Course	e N	2000	241 acres
Route 12 Complex Bldg. 1	N	2000	27,000 sf
South County Library (W. Amwell	N (leased)	2000	2,781 sf
Main Street Administration	R	2004	18,000 sf
Dedicated Senior Center	R	2005	13,500 sf
HazMat Building	N	2005	3,800 sf

Library Headquarters (Flem	nington) R (doubled)	2006	55,000 sf
Hall of Records	R	2006	7,500 sf
Southard Building	R	2006	800 sf
Warehouse/Records	N	2001/2012	33,000 sf
Emergency Services Bldg.	R/addition	2010	10,000 sf
Vehicle Maintenance	R/addition	2010	22,112 sf
Rutgers Cooperative Ext.	Relo of services	2011	7,000 sf
Auxiliary Garages:			
Everittstown	N	1990	2,000 sf
Lebanon	N	1995	2,000 sf
Traffic Maintenance	N	1996	11,500 sf
Mt. Airy	N	2003	2,000 sf
Parks:			
Mountain Farm Park	Acquired	1998	249 acres
Off-Leash Dog Park	N	2000	1.5 acres
South County Park	N	mid-2000s	89 acres
Hilltop Preserve	Acquired	2013	55 acres

#### **County Services**

Through the years, the County has been mandated (by law, rules or regulations) to provide certain services but also delivers a vast array of discretionary services. Listed below are the types of services that the County delivers (both mandated and discretionary) and continues to deliver despite the economic downturn in the 21st century.

records"; records deeds and mortgages

and processes passports.

Election Board: In charge of registration of voters in

Hunterdon County; coordinates all elections. In 2012 there were 86,717 registered voters in Hunterdon County.

Finance Department: Responsible for all financial matters

including budgets, payroll, investments and purchasing procedures. In 2012 the County budget was approximately

88 million dollars.

Health Department: Provides public health services like res-

taurant inspections, and educational information on lyme disease, radon detection and rabies and food borne

illnesses. Coordinates County Health Preparedness efforts. Human Resources: Provides personnel services to 540

County employees.

Human Services: Provides transportation, housing,

senior services and social services to

eligible residents.

Information Services: Provides computer/GIS services and

technical support to all departments.

Law Enforcement: Encompasses all law-related enforce-

ment services including the County Corrections Department, County Prosecutor's Office and Sheriff's Department. The Corrections Department is the designated custodian of all adult offenders; its Correction Facility has a

capacity of 150 inmates.

The Prosecutor's Office is responsible for investigating crimes and prosecuting offenders. The Sheriff's Department provides security to the Justice Center

and assists municipalities.

Library: Provides library services to residents at

3 County locations: Flemington, Clinton and Ringoes and a traveling Bookmobile. In 2013 there were 504,575 items in the library inventory. There also are 7 affiliated libraries (Bunnvale, Frenchtown, High Bridge, Hol land, Readington, Tewksbury, and

Three Bridges).

Parks and Recreation: Protects the County's natural resources

and provides passive/active recreation

programs.

Planning: Provides technical/professional sup-

port to municipalities for Hunterdon's physical development. Coordinates Open Space initiatives, preserved

lands.

Printing/Mail/Records: Provides all printing, mail and records

services to County departments.

Public Safety: Provides a wide range of preventative,

protective and emergency services through 9-1-1 communications (total 2011 calls dispatched: 125,033), the Office of the Fire Marshal, the Office of Emergency Management, the Emergency Services Training Center, Homeland Security efforts and the Hunterdon County Correctional Facility (1,107

commitments in 2011).

Public Works: Covers a broad spectrum of services

including maintenance of County buildings and grounds, roads and bridges (250 miles of County roads and 365 bridges), and the oversight of all

new county construction.

Solid Waste/Recycling: Oversees the operation of the County

Transfer Station in Clinton Township and the County's oversight of the Solid Waste Management Plan (2010 tonnage reports 37,792 of municipal solid

waste generation.

Surrogate's Court: Responsible for probating wills (438 in

2011), guardianships and trusteeships.

Tax Board: Supervises municipal tax assessor's

functions.

Weights and Measures: Inspects and adjusts all weighing and

measuring devices in the County, including deli scales and gas pumps.

The challenge of any governing body is the balancing act to deliver public services in the most efficient and effective manner. These two words have become synonymous for public service delivery systems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Efficient services are doing things right and effective services are doing the right things. Every service delivered, whether mandated or discretionary, has a following of supporters. The governing body's decisions are often unpopular, but it is their fiduciary responsibility to deliver the most efficient, effective service possible to the citizenry of Hunterdon County.

Hunterdon County government and its citizens should be proud of the accomplishments and services delivered for the past 300 years.

## Agriculture, 1964 by Bernard F. Ramsburg



The agriculture of the area of what is now Hunterdon County has undergone many changes during the past 250 years. Agriculture started here as pioneer farms hewn out of the virgin wilderness. These farms furnished the entire living of the family, but in the beginning there was little or no surplus to sell or trade. Eventually, they developed into family farms that produced for sale grain, dairy products, meat or meat animals.

When the first pioneers settled in the county it was almost all solid forest. The early settlers did not usually acquire large acreage. For example, the farms sold from one part of "the Field tract" averaged only 103 acres. As the land could not be worked profitably with slave labor and as there was a scarcity of labor for hire, conditions did not lend themselves to the development of large estates. On the other hand, it was not difficult to acquire land for a family farm. According to people of that time only those who did not have much ambition were unable to become farm owners, even though they started as tenants. An occasional man acquired several farms, but few ever left all of their property to one heir. They generally acquired the farms so they could leave each child a farm.

Pioneer farmers were wasteful in the use of land. Peter Kalm, a visitor from Sweden, criticized New Jersey land care practices as early as 1748. Farmers were out the land of one farm and moved to another. Some did not even bother to haul manure from the barns to the fields. But better practices were gradually adopted. Wood ashes were early used for fertilizer. Later they were shipped into the county by rail.

While the farmers of the county were slow to adopt the use of lime, this later became a common practice. Calcined lime was considered by many to be a fertilizer and a cure-all for all soil ailments. Farmers across the Delaware River in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, used lime before Hunterdon County farms did. By the 1790's, lime from kilns in Bucks County was hauled across the river from Pennsylvania, and

many were built in the northern part of the county to "burn" limestone quarried nearby.

According to an article in the *Cultivator*, a farm magazine, in 1839 farmers were using from 50 to 100 bushels of lime to the acre. The smaller amounts were used on the poor land and the larger amounts were used on the better fields. As a general rule lime was slacked with water before it was spread on the land, but too often the soil was damaged by incompletely slacked lime. A particularly bad practice was that of putting the unslacked lime in small piles in the field to be "air slacked" before spreading. Early in the 20th century ground limestone gradually begun to replace slacked lime. During the late 1930s the use of lime on Hunterdon's farms was stimulated by payments through programs of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

Pulverized gypsum, known as plaster of Paris or "land plaster", was first recorded as being used in 1739. It was imported from Nova Scotia and from the Hudson River Valley. After 1770 it came into general use with quantities up to a bushel per acre being applied. It was considered especially necessary if clover were sown with the wheat. It was crushed at mills within the county.

After railroads were built greens and marl was imported from Monmouth County. However, since such large quantities of this fertilizer were required per acre it never received widespread use in Hunterdon County. With the coming of commercial fertilizers, marl fell into disuse. It was seldom advertised after 1875. Another fertilizer which came into use about the middle 1800s was guano. This was the droppings of the sea birds that inhabited the arid islands off the west coast of South America. However, it was too expensive to be used except for special purposes. The use of green manure crops that were plowed under was adopted by a few in the early 1800s.

In the later 1800s use of commercial fertilizer as it is now known became common. As more has been learned about the testing of the soils to determine their fertility, the use of lime and fertilizer has become more specialized. Many farmers today not only purchase the fertilizer, but also have the dealer spread it, using the amount needed according to the soil test.

Soil erosion was a serious problem almost from the earliest days. Some early farmers followed definite practices to control it, but most did little about it until fairly recent times. The use of cover crops was started only in the late 1800s. During the early 1940s the Extension Service advocated sowing rye grass during the last corn cultivation. Since rye grass provides a good cover during the winter it helps

greatly in checking erosion. Today the practice is a common one.

In 1935 the Soil Conservation Service started to work in the Ringoes area, where it did demonstration work on 150 farms. This involved 10,896 acres in the Neshanic River Watershed. In addition, demonstration work was done on 119 farms, comprising 12,682 acres, in the Clinton area. The demonstration work included the laying out of contours, the building of terraces and drainage ways, and the planting of trees and shrubbery. A CCC camp was set up at Clinton Point. Much of the labor used in the soil erosion project was furnished by the boys in this camp. A soil Conservation District which included Hunterdon County was set up in the 1940s and as a result of the program, many farmers have adopted soil erosion control measures.

The early Hunterdon County settlers built log houses, adapted from those of the Swedes of South Jersev. These were made of squared and notched oak logs of a size to make a wall about 10 inches thick. As soon as saw use and lum-



make a wall about 10
inches thick.

As soon as saw mills came into

ber was available, frame houses were built. The log houses were then used as stables or as other farm buildings.

Some stone houses were built quite early, and many of these are still standing. Only a few brick houses were built, as other materials were handier. A brick home built in 1760 by John Reading the younger near Flemington Junction is still standing and is still used as a home. The bricks were made from clay nearby.

Homes were frequently modest in size, with additions being added as the family grew and finances permitted. Basement cellars were common. Sometimes they were used for kitchens, but mostly for food storage. Many of the early houses had an outside kitchen adjoining the house.

Some early observers noted that many Hunterdon farmers preferred having large, well-constructed barns to having substantial homes. After lumber had become easily available, the early barns had frames made of large hand-hewn white oak timbers. These were covered with sawed weather boarding. Many of these old barns are still standing, but they have been remodeled to serve modern conditions. Carpenters who have remodeled these old barns attest to the strength and hardness of these old white oak frames. As log outbuildings disappeared they were succeeded by corn cribs, wagon houses, smoke houses and other buildings that were more or less standard for the area.

Most farms had barracks, adopted from Dutch settlers. A barrack was in essence a roof which could be adjusted in height to that of the hay stored beneath it.

When poultry keeping became common as a commercial enterprise during the early 1900s multiple unit poultry houses were built on most farms, and the necessary number of brooder houses also were built. Brooder houses were generally 8 feet by 10 feet or 10 feet by 12 feet, and were built as single units because of the danger of fire. Multiple story poultry houses began to be built before World War II. After the war, many large poultry houses were built, often holding thousands of laying birds. Most of these houses were built with automatic equipment and were constructed so that they could be cleaned with tractors. Houses in which the laying birds were kept in individual cages were first tried in the early 1930's, without much success. In later years, this had become a more common practice. With every practice mechanized, one man often takes care of thousands of birds.

When farmers first started dairying on a commercial scale, the old barns were easily remodeled to accommodate the small herds that were kept. When it became necessary to have rather expensive equipment in order to handle the milk produced according to city Board of Health regulations, it became economically necessary to have larger herds. Additions were built on many of the old barns, and some farmers built entirely new dairy barns. In some cases, buildings were constructed to house the milking herd in large open pens, with a modern "milking parlor" also used by some dairymen with conventional barns. More recently milking parlors are so equipped that the milk drawn from the cows goes directly into the milk house through a pipeline and is there cooled and stored in a large bulk tank. Some dairymen also use pipeline milkers in their regular barns.

Silos were in use on a few dairy farms before 1900. As the herds in-

creased, their advantages became greater. Most commercial dairymen now use silos to store grass silage as well as corn silage. A recent practice on some farms is the ensiling of partly cured hay as "haylage".

The earliest fences were "worm fences" made of rails. Chestnut was the most common wood used for this kind of fence, as the wood was easily split and very durable. When wood for rails became more scarce in a locality, post and rail fences came into use. These took more labor to build, but required fewer rails. Some farmers, for appearance's sake, built post and rail fences along roads and used the old worm fences around the back fields. Few stone fences were built, as there was so much labor involved.

Hedge fences were tried fairly early. The first plants used were the English and American white hawthorn. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Osage orange, became popular. Many of these hedge fences are still in existence. Wire fences were first tried in the 1850s but did not become common until after the 1880s , when barbed wire came into general use. Fences of barbed wires were opposed by many people at first because of injuries that occurred to animals, particularly horses, but they grew in popularity because of the ease of construction. Woven wire fences were also used chiefly for poultry. Electric fences for cattle came into use in the later 1930s. They were especially used around temporary pastures.

Farm implements changed slowly. For more than a century, plows were of wood with metal joints, but eventually iron moldboards came into use. The Deats plow was invented in 1828 by John Deats of Stockton. This had a moldboard that its proponents said made it



scour better than others. This was manufactured by John Deats and his descendants. Other farm tools that were invented by county residents included a cultivator invented by Oliver Kugler of Three Bridges in 1837, and one by Reuben K. Niece of Frenchtown, in 1878.

Much farm work was done by hand until after 1850. Corn planters

and grain drills did not come into much use until after that date. Mowing machines were tried out before 1820 but did not prove practical until the 1840's. The early grain reapers could be used as mowers by removing the grain platform and changing the sickle. The reaper came into rather general use during the 1850s and 1860s. After 1870, mowing machines distinct from the reaper came into general use. In the later 1880s binders replaced the old reapers. In the 1930s, small combines were perfected and soon made the binder obsolete. Self-propelled combines are now replacing those pulled by tractors.

Hay rakes were evolved from rather crude machines. The self-dumping "flip-flop" rake of the early 1800s was replaced by the sulkey rake, and that in turn gave way to the side delivery rake. The hay tedder was introduced about 1870. Hay loaders and portable hay balers were developed about 1890. Corn binders did not come into common use in the county until about 1920, and then because greater amounts of ensilage were being made. Corn shellers for both hand and power equipment developed in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The Deats corn sheller was very popular.

Threshing machines powered by horses were introduced after 1830. Some were powered by horses on the end of a sweep, and others were run by tread power. Portable threshers using power from portable steam engines or steam tractors came into use about 1890. Commercially built lime spreaders appeared after 1850, and the first commercially built manure spreaders appeared after 1880. Incubators also came into use in the 1880s, and were soon widely adopted despite a rumor that the chicks would never lose the smell from the kerosene lamps.

Portable steam engines were first used about 1850, and portable gasoline engines came into use about 1900. Gasoline tractors began to replace the horse during World War I. Portable electrical plants also were acquired by some farmers at about this same time. These furnished electricity almost entirely for lighting. High-line electricity came in the 1920s and 1930s, bringing some of the biggest changes on the farm and in the farm home. Milking machines were first used about the time of World War I, but did not come into general use until about the time of World War II.

Corn was one of the first crops grown by the pioneers after the land was partially cleared, with remaining trees killed by girdling. Later small grains, particularly wheat, oats, and rye were grown. Rye was sometimes sown in cornfields in the fall. Crude methods of growing corn in hills were developed early, with the corn being planted by hand. This method made it possible to cultivate the corn hills on all

sides. In pioneer days, small grains and hay were harvested with a sickle. Later a scythe was used, and by the time of the Revolution the grain cradle was in general use. Until the first thresher, most grain was threshed with a flail.

With exception of buckwheat, the grains grown by present day Hunterdon farmers are almost the same as those grown in Colonial days. The varieties have been much improved, and with improved cultural practices much larger yields are obtained. Much of this increase has been due to farm tests conducted by the Agricultural Extension Service to determine the best varieties for conditions found in Hunterdon County. Hybrid corn was introduced here by such farm tests.

The first hay grown was a native grass, but timothy and clover were introduced by the early settlers, often grown together in the same field. Alfalfa was first tried in the county about 1795 but was not successful. Its culture was promoted in the early 1900s by the County Board of Agriculture and the Experiment Station of Rutgers University. It proved successful on many farms and was grown rather extensively at the time of World War I.

Timothy hay was grown on many farms and sold to hay presses located in different places of the county during the late 1800s and early 1900s. This hay was shipped to the cities for use as horse feed. After the horse was replaced by the truck and automobile, this market disappeared.

Soy beans were introduced in the late 1800's, but did not really catch on until the Agricultural Adjustment Administration promoted the crop for soil building.

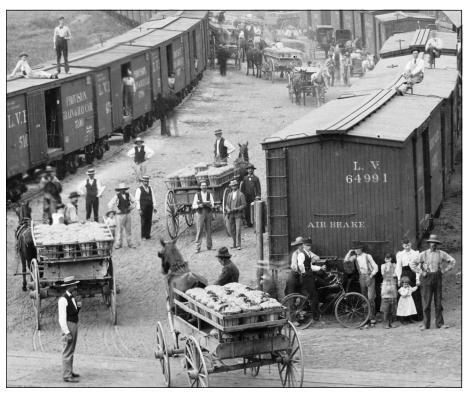
Potatoes were first grown as a garden crop, but became a commercial crop during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Business Review* of Hunterdon, Morris and Somerset counties for 1891 said that potatoes ranked next to peaches in importance in Hunterdon County. After World War I, they dropped rapidly in popularity as a crop.

Tomatoes were once scorned as poisonous, but after 1850 became an important vegetable. Canneries in Lambertville, Pennington, Hopewell, Titusville, Ringoes, Stockton and Bloomsbury were established during the later decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Market tomatoes also were raised in the Quakertown, Cherryville and Pittstown area starting about 1900, mostly for the New York market. Starting in the late 1930s many farmers contracted with Campbell Soup Co. for canhouse tomatoes. Some also tried peas and lima beans for canneries. These did not prove as successful as tomatoes. The tomato as a field crop has declined in Hunterdon since the last war.

Apples and peaches have been the fruits grown on the largest scale in the county. Practically every early farm had an apple orchard in early days. The fruit was produced for family use, and the surplus was sold to distilleries. During later years the number of commercial orchards greatly declined. This was largely due to the increase in the number of insect pests and diseases.

Peach production started on a large scale during the 1850s around Sergeantsville when Dr. George Larison, planted an orchard of 3,000 trees. Within a few years, peaches were being sent to New York by rail. Soon a special train was sent during harvest season from Flemington to Lambertville, to Bordentown, to South Amboy, from which place the peaches were sent by boat to New York City. After 1863 special peach trains were sent from Flemington via the South Branch of the New Jersey Central. Many peaches were also sent over the main line of this railroad from Whitehouse. The Lehigh Valley Railroad after 1875 also hauled peaches. On one day in 1882, 64 carloads of peaches were shipped from the county – 21 on the South Branch, 33 on the Lehigh Valley, and 10 on the Belvidere Division of the

Wagons loaded with baskets overflowing with ripe peaches pull into the Lehigh Valley Railroad station in Pittstown in 1897 for transport to New York City. Photo from Enrico and Chiara Chandoha



Pennsylvania Railroad. Peach growing stimulated other industries such as nurseries and basket factories. It also gave employment to hundreds of orchard laborers.

In 1889 there were two million peach trees in Hunterdon County, and nearly one million baskets of peaches were sold. In 1899 there were about one million trees. About this time, the San Jose scale made its appearance in Hunterdon. Sprays that would give good control were unknown, and the industry declined so that by 1919 there were only 180,255 peach trees in the county. By 1959, there were only 14,927.

Early livestock consisted mainly of cattle, horses, swine and sheep. Cattle were kept for meat and milk and as oxen for draft animals. Horses were mainly work animals. Swine were kept for meat, and pork was the principal meat used. Sheep were raised primarily for wool, although some were slaughtered for meat. The animals in the early years were nondescript. They were allowed to roam the woods, and selective breeding was almost unknown. Crop land was fenced to keep animals out. In the fall, swine were allowed to fatten "on mast" (acorns and other nuts). Crude brands were used to denote ownership of animals. As more land was cleared more pasture was available, and more attention was given to the improvement of livestock. Keeping animals in fenced pasture made it possible to use selective breeding practices through the use of better sires.

The "common" hogs of early days were the result of indiscriminate mixing of strains brought in from many countries. English breeds of swine such as the Berkshire and Yorkshire were imported. Also fairly early, the "Jersey Red" was a breed developed within the state. American breeds such as the Poland China and Chester Whites became rather common after the 1840's. Size was stressed in the early animals, and the best hog was a fat hog. Later, quality of the carcass became more important.

Efforts were made in the early 1800s to improve the "common" sheep of the county by importing English breeds such as the Improved Leichester and Southdown. Purebred rams were used after 1820. The interest in the improvement of sheep was due to the ready market of wool. Sheep raising declined greatly around the turn of the century. Since World War II, the number of sheep has increased appreciably, especially among newcomers who have bought country homes. Sheep products marketed are "Easter lambs," fat lambs, and wool. The Hunterdon County Sheep Association, which was organized in the early 1950s, has an annual cooperative fat lamb sale.

Early efforts were made to encourage farmers to improve their horses by use of better stallions. By 1800 the owners of good stal-



Franklin Township farmers Brevoort W. Conover (left) and Newt Trimmer (right) in the front wagon with Sam Gano (left) and friends in the back wagon head home from delivering milk to the Pittstown creamery around 1910. Photo from Virginia and Brevoort C. Conover

lions received large breeding fees. Much of the early emphasis was on fast road horses. However, the first Flemington Fair in 1856 offered prizes for the best work horses. Soon after the Civil War, it became more economical to import horses from the Midwest than to raise them. The animals were usually sold at auction. Horses brought good prices until tractors became numerous in the 1920s. There has been a growing interest in riding horses in recent years. In 1959 there were 516 horses reported in Hunterdon County.

Cattle were allowed to shift for themselves to a great extent during early years. Many farmers did not stable their animals during the winter, and little grain was fed except to the ones being fattened. The main interest was in the production of a home supply of dairy products and meat. Any surplus was sold at village stores or to neighbors. Butter was a by-product of most farms, and a relatively few farms made cheese for sale. The Capners of Flemington sold cheese to Martha Washington when Philadelphia was the nation's capital.

As the market for dairy products was limited, there was more incentive to keep beef cattle. Shorthorn bulls were imported from England, and this breed was popular for many years. After 1871, when beef from the mid-West was shipped to the East in refrigerator cars, the market for eastern beef declined.

Although fluid milk was sometimes sold in the towns of the county,

the daily delivery of milk was begun in Flemington only in 1867. About the same time a few farmers near Flemington began to ship milk by rail to the New York market. Creameries were established in the county starting with one in Sergeantsville in 1881 that made butter, cream and cheese. Skimmed milk and whey were returned free to the farmers to feed their pigs. During that same year, creameries were built at Locktown, Little York and Oak Summit, and during the next 20 years creameries were built in 24 other communities of the county. The local creameries revolutionized the dairy industry, though some farmers continued to make butter for sale in the village stores.

Fluid milk shipments from Flemington increased, and about 1878 shipments also were being made from Whitehouse. Soon the creameries were being hurt by the new competition. After 1900, the creameries and the one or two small milk condenseries of the county gradually went out of business, the last one in the early 1930's. Two small cheese factories, one at Lebanon and one at Little York were in business until recent years.

There had been cooperative peach auctions during the time when peaches were so important in the county. Now the idea of cooperation was applied to the sale of milk.

Some farmers in the county became members of the "Five State Milk Producers' Association", which tried to raise farm prices in 1899, but little was accomplished at that time. A county unit of the Dairymen's League was organized in 1918, and it still has a considerable membership here. The League generally served as a bargaining agent, but for a time took over some milk plants, processed the milk and sold it in the city. These plants were later discontinued.

The County Milk Producers' Association was organized in 1933. This was a division of the United Milk Producers Association, a statewide organization. The United Milk Producers served as a bargaining agent for those selling to independent dealers not selling in the Philadelphia area. Some farmers in the county joined the Consumers' Cooperative Association at Belle Mead that sold the milk through a consumers' cooperative in New York City. Those dairy farmers in the southern part of the county whose milk went to the Philadelphia area were members of the Interstate Milk Producers Association. Most of this milk has gone to Trenton for a number of years.

With the growth of dairying as a commercial enterprise, more interest was developed in improving milk production and the butterfat content of milk produced by the individual cows. Dairy breeds, therefore attracted increasing attention. The Agricultural Society which ran the Flemington Fair added one dairy breed after another

to its premium list and gradually eliminated beef breeds.

Jerseys were popular with many farmers during the period when milk was sold to creameries. Other breeds adopted by individual farmers were the Guernsey, Avreshire, and Brown Swiss. But it was the Holstein which won out in the race. The first Holsteins in the county were imported by John T. Ellis in 1871. The Holstein breeders of the county formed a joint association with the Somerset County breeders at the time of World War I. Later they formed their own association. This association became dormant in the 1920's, and was not reorganized until 1959. However, it now has a very active program, including the holding of a large County Holstein Show annually. Many of the members are and have been active in the State Holstein Association. William W. Phillips, of Milford, served as president of the State Association for several years. The Jersey, Guernsey, Ayrshire and Brown Swiss breeders of the county have been active in their state associations, but no county association of these breeds have been organized. Lloyd B. Wescott of Rosemont has served as President of the New Jersey Guernsey Breeder Association.

The first diary herd improvement association, then called, a Cow Testing Association, was organized in 1919 at Ringoes with Fred Totten as secretary. Other associations were organized in the vicinity of Flemington and Pittstown. At the present time there are five Dairy Herd Improvement Associations in the County. These associations enable the farmer to have complete records of his individual cows, and also give him feeding recommendations through a computer service arrangement made available through the Agricultural Extension Service and the Dairy Department at Rutgers University.

Two purebred Holstein bull associations were organized in the early 1930s. These enabled the members to have the use of excellent bulls after they were proved. In 1939, at the suggestion of E.J. Perry, Extension Dairy Specialist of Rutgers University, the first Cooperative Artificial Breeding Association in the United States was organized. While its members included farmers from Warren and Somerset Counties as well as Hunterdon, it was sponsored by the Hunterdon County Board of Agriculture. A veterinarian from Denmark, trained the veterinarian who was employed by the new association. The plan was very successful from the beginning. This idea has spread to all parts of the United States where dairying is important. The success of this project was due in great measure not only to the leadership of Mr. Perry, but also to the leadership of the County Board of Agriculture, particularly the president, C.E. Snyder, and to the leadership of Dwight M. Babbitt, County Agricultural Agent.

The Association at first used only Holstein bulls but later acquired those of other breeds. It is now part of a state-wide cooperative artificial breeding association. There are also at least two national private artificial breeding organizations whose representatives artificially breed cattle in the county. The majority of the cattle in the county are now bred artificially.

Beef cattle and later dairy cattle were in the early days brought into the county in droves, driven from the mid-West. After the building of the railroad they were shipped in by rail and now by truck. Lack of feed and pasture on which to raise heifers has to a considerable extent helped create a market for milk cows brought in by dealers.

Though Hunterdon has been one of the leading poultry counties of New Jersey and of the United States for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the farm poultry flock in the early days was a very small sideline of the individual farmer. The birds were left to forage for themselves to a great extent. The poultry shows held at county fairs were devoted to fancy birds rather than birds kept for utility. With the development of good markets for poultry products, the situation changed rapidly. This coincided with two inventions, the incubator and the brooders, which have contributed much to the modernizing of the industry.

A Hunterdon hatcheryman, Joseph Wilson, of Stockton was the first man to ship day-old baby chicks. The poultry industry grew rapidly thereafter, and hatcheries developed in the county until millions of chicks were produced annually. White leghorns were raised for eggs, Barred Plymouth Rocks, Rhode Island Reds, and New Hampshire Reds were grown for meat and eggs. Later, cross breeds were developed. Since most of the eggs from the county went to New York City and its vicinity, where white eggs were preferred, the emphasis was on the production of white eggs. An important development was that of separating male from female chicks before sale.

The Hunterdon Poultry Association was organized in 1912. This organization became particularly active after the first County Agricultural Agent started working in the county in 1927. It sponsored the Hunterdon Egg Laying Contest, the headquarters of which was located just outside of Flemington. This was operated by the Poultry Department of Rutgers University, and helped to improve the breeding of many poultry flocks. The County Poultry Association also cooperated with the Extension Service and Experiment Station in all efforts for the betterment of the poultry industry.

During the 1920s at the suggestion of Theodore Dilts, Vice-President of the County Board of Agriculture, the State Police and the College of Agriculture developed a system of tattooing poultry and registration of tattoo numbers. This made possible the identification of sto-

len birds, and in a large measure was responsible for the decrease in the number of poultry stolen.

The Flemington Cooperative Auction Market was organized in 1930 by some of the leading poultrymen of the county. At its first auction, 60 cases of eggs were sold. The Market was successful from the first, and soon added the sale of poultry. Several years later a livestock sale was also added. The Market soon outgrew its temporary quarters in the center of Flemington and bought a large building on Park Avenue, formerly used by the Empire Cut Glass factory. Other buildings have since been built on this property. The Market has changed its method of selling eggs in recent years. In 1960 a "candle and carton" program was started. Approximately 3,000 cases of eggs each week are being handled under this program at the present time. Auction sales are no longer held, but about 3,000 cases of other eggs are sold wholesale each week.

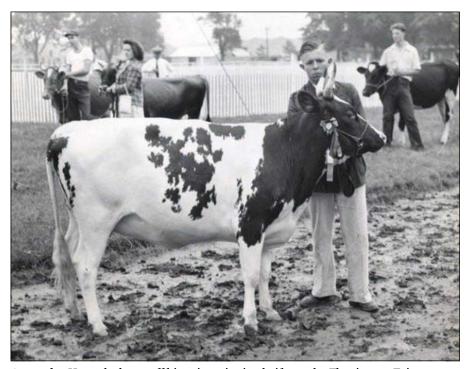
Of the 300 egg producer members of the Market in 1963, 32 were bringing in half of the eggs sold. Just after World War II, there were more than 1200 egg producer members. Poultry sales of the Market have decreased greatly in volume, due to the saving in time and handling for the owners of large flocks to sell their old hens or cull birds on the farm. The livestock sale has also decreased in volume. This is probably due to a considerable extent to the decrease in the number of farms in the county.

The County Board of Agriculture was organized in the 1880s when legislation was passed setting up such organization in each county. In this early period, the Board, with the aid of the College of Agriculture, sponsored educational meetings such as Farmer's Institutes. It became dormant in the early 1900's, but was reorganized in 1920 with C.E. Snyder, as president, and R.S. Schomp as secretary. These two served in these offices for 33 years and to a great degree were responsible for the success of this organization. The County Board of Agriculture led a fight for years to establish an Agricultural Extension Service in the County. It was successful in 1927 when E.A. Gauntt was appointed the first County Agricultural Agent. Mr. Gauntt served until July 1, 1934, when he resigned to become State Extension Dairy Specialist. He was succeeded by Dwight M. Babbitt who served until July 1, 1959.

A district 4-H Club agent with headquarters in the County Extension office was appointed in 1930. He supervised 4-H programs in Hunterdon, Somerset counties, and later in Warren County. Brandon Wright was the first district Club Agent. He was succeeded on October 1, 1935 by Bernard F. Ramsburg, who was appointed full-time County Club Agent of Hunterdon County on February 1, 1936.

He served in this office until July 1, 1960. Hunterdon County has had a full-time Home Demonstration Agent since 1938.

The County Board of Agriculture's Executive Committee was expanded in the late 1930's to include representatives of all farm and rural organizations in the County. This organization has sponsored many movements for the betterment of the County. Its aid in establishing an artificial breeding unit has been mentioned. Its sponsorship led to the writing of an agricultural history of the County, *Rural Hunterdon* by Hubert G. Schmidt. It purchased and gave to the County the land on which is now located the building in which the Extension Service and other agricultural agencies are housed. This building was opened for use in October 1963. Of its many accom-



A proud 4-H youth shows off his prize-winning heifer at the Flemington Fair, 1940. The Fair, held annually in Flemington from 1848 to 1999, was moved to West Amwell Township in 2000 and renamed the Hunterdon County 4-H and Agricultural Fair. Photo from the *Hunterdon Democrat* 

plishments, perhaps, the most outstanding was the backing the Board of Agriculture gave in the establishment of the Hunterdon Medical Center, which opened its doors in 1953 with a group of eight specialists and 121 bed capacity. The Center has added a diagnostic center and the staff of specialists has increased to 24. The first Board of Trustees of the Medical Center appointed by the County Board was

as follows: Clifford E. Snyder, President; George R. Hanks, Vice President; Lloyd B. Wescott, Secretary; James C. Weisel, Treasurer; also Samuel L. Bodine, the Rev. Edward J. Dalton, the Rev. Edward C. Dunbar, Dr. Raymond J. Germain, J. Seward Johnson, Mrs. William F. Leicester, Waldo R. McNutt, Joseph E. Moskowitz, Herbert D. Stem, Mrs. Charles E. Wagg. The first director of the Medical Center was Ray E. Trussell.

The County Board of Agriculture not only sponsored the Extension Service but also helped in many ways to make the different phases of the Extension program successful. The Executive Committee of the Board at its monthly meetings has heard reports of the various agents and has given advice and suggestions. Ringoes Grange #12, organized in 1873, was the first Grange organized in Hunterdon County. This grange sponsored many ideas. A number of other granges were organized in succeeding years and a Pomona or County Grange was organized in 1875. The early granges were strictly farmer organizations. The grange served as purchasing agent for its members in buying supplies of various kinds. About 1915 most of the granges discontinued such store activities. At the present time, the following granges are active in Hunterdon County: Ringoes, Lock-

The Blew family, owners of the preserved 159-acre Oak Grove Plantation, started going to the Union Square Greenmarket in New York City three times a week in 1980 to sell their fruits, vegetables, flowers, plants, herbs, spices, hot peppers, meats, baked goods, beans and grains. Some products are seasonal; some are available year-round. They also offer a Community Supported Agriculture program in Hunterdon that provides weekly boxes of food to a large number of members. Photo taken in 2007; from Oak Grove Plantation



town, Sergeantsville, Kingwood, Oak Grove, Spring Mills, Grand View, Riverside, Hickory, Stanton, Whitehouse, Mt. Lebanon and Sidney.

The Flemington Fair was organized in the 1850s and did much to aid in the betterment of the agriculture of the county by its exhibits. After an interruption of some years in holding annual fairs, in 1910 the Association reorganized to become again active with Major E.B. Allen, the manager of the Fair. He served from then until his death in 1947. Largely through his efforts the Fair was kept alive and growing. He worked with the agricultural interests of the county, in fostering progressive programs through displays, demonstrations and competitive exhibitions in connection with products of the farm.

Starting in 1929 the only dairy cattle exhibited at the Fair were 4-H animals. The 4-H Dairy Show at first consisted only of animals from Hunterdon and nearby counties. In 1947 the State 4-H Dairy Show was moved to Flemington Fair, and it has been held there each year since.

Other 4-H exhibits were developed after 1930. Now in addition to the 4-H Dairy Show, which consists of about 250 animals, the state 4-H Sheep Show, the state 4-H Quality Lamb Show and Sale, the State 4-H Horse Show and the district 4-H Goat Show are held at Flemington Fair. The County 4-H food and clothing exhibits, the county 4-H Sheep Show and the county 4-H Club booth exhibits and the State 4-H Tractor Driving Contest are also held there.

The agricultural exhibits and Grange displays, farm machinery exhibits, flower show, Farmer's Day demonstrations and other activities and the 4-H Department all help to make Flemington Fair the outstanding agricultural fair in New Jersey.

The Farmer's Alliance became active in the 1880s. With the decline of the Populist movement the Farmer's Alliance units in the County merged with the different Granges. Among other farm organizations serving the agricultural community and the county are the Farmer's Union, the Master Dairy Farmers' Guild, and the Delaware Valley Farmers Cooperative.

# The Changing Face of Agriculture, 1989 update by George Conard

During the past quarter century there have been tremendous changes in agriculture as it was known in preceding years mani-



Franklin Township has a number of equine operations for polo pony breeding, hunter/jumper training, public instruction and miles of riding trails. It also is the home of the 137-acre preserved Deo Volente Farms that breeds harness racing champions of the future. Photo from The Franklin Archives.

fested not only on the farm but also throughout the entire infrastructure that supports the county's agricultural industry.

In 1964 dairy and poultry farms represented the predominant agricultural enterprises in the county. Dairy farms have declined in number from over 300 in 1964 to 45 in 1989, although average herd size has increased from 40 to 85 milking cows during the same period.

The many community milk processing plants evident in the earlier period have been reduced to two large-scale processors. Both firms rely principally on milk brought into the county and on retail distribution of milk and other products through convenience stores that have supplanted doorstep retail delivery routes. Today there is not a single dealer for any major farm equipment manufacturer in the county. Community dairy feed dealers have dwindled to two stores for which farm business is on the decline, while servicing residential demands has increased.

Additional changes are evident; the Flemington Auction Market, once a dominant sales place for farm livestock and eggs, closed in early 1970 and its buildings have been converted to office space. In the early 1960s the Monday morning traffic on Main Street, Flemington consisted primarily of dairy farmers bringing their livestock to this market. Today, cars of shoppers and business people throng the thoroughfare.

Poultry farms were a major enterprise in 1964, their numbers increasing in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Many poultry houses, built during this period, have been abandoned or torn down and today only a few small part-time egg farms remain in the county. Comparative economics and the environmental concerns of new neighbors moving into the areas where these farms were located proved to be the dominant forces and consequently the industry has almost ceased to exist along with its related feed suppliers and the aforementioned Flemington Auction Market.

When dairy and poultry farms were going out of business in the mid-1960's, farmland assessment taxation came into being. This allowed farmland to be taxed based upon its use rather than its higher development value. Land had to be farmed to qualify for this preferential assessment, which spurred an emerging type of "cash crop" farmer, who would own only a small portion of the total acres he farmed, and rent the remainder from other landowners. This type of farming was encouraged by new equipment technology that provided for a crop to be grown, harvested, stored, and marketed with a minimum of labor. The majority of these "cash grain" farmers produced corn, soybeans and wheat on an average combined total of 800-1,000 acres. This type of farming activity frequently resulted in the separation of farm ownership from farm operations.

Another contribution to this type of farming was a massive purchase of land by a major speculator during the late 1960s in anticipation of a fourth major jetport. This was to be located in Readington Township. Local opposition to the jetport proposal and changes in the airline industry, plus a recession economy terminated the jetport proposal and resulted in decreased farmland value. Much of the land acquired by the speculator was sold in the mid-1970s at reduced price to "cash grain" farmers who had benefited from favorable prices during this period. Subsequently, in the 1980s, as lower world prices impacted severely on these farms, farm operations have been either diversified or discontinued.

However, in the mid-1980s, demand for farmland for conversion to residential and industrial use in some sections of the county resulted in a sharp escalation in the land values throughout the county. This condition spurred changes in agriculture resulting in a more "intensive" use of the acreage. The intensive agricultural operations which began to dot Hunterdon County's rural landscape during the 1980s reflected a wide variety of farm operations. These farms are often referred to as "specialty" farms, reflecting the type of items, which were mostly sold direct to customers. The increase in residential units in the county during this period provided an increased local market for this production. Examples of these specialty farms are

fruit, berry, vegetable, nursery and vineyard/winery units, many offering pick-your-own options to customers. A common thread among specialty farms is that they quite often sell recreation in addition to the crop for which the customer pays directly. These recreational units may be a wine and cheese tasting party or a farm tour. Some of these "boutique" farms offer specialty meat, organic produce or flowers or farm-produced grain. Some of these farmers currently take their produce directly to their customers using "green markets" or direct retailing markets in New York City or other nearby population centers. (A practice also common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Other examples of intensive land use are the wholesale nursery, sod and greenhouse operations that have been proliferating throughout the county during the past ten years. This growth mirrors the demands of an expanding commercial, industrial and residential market.

There have always been horses in the county, though their numbers dwindled substantially as tractors supplanted draft animals. Horse farms began to grow rapidly in number during the mid-1960s with strong growth in Thoroughbred and Standardbred breeding farms along with recreational horse farms. The latter range from several acres to several hundred acres with the larger units having commercial boarding and training facilities that typically offer indoor riding arenas that provide customers with the ability to ride without regard to daylight hours or weather conditions. Clubs such as the Amwell Valley Hunt for fox hunting and the Amwell Valley Polo Club provide competitive equine sporting events. The New Jersey Sire Stakes program has fostered growth of the equine industry. Since the Tax Reform Act of 1986 removed many of the tax shelter benefits that stimulated investments in horse breeding, there has been a general slowdown in the origination of new horse farms. However, horse farming continues to be one of the major agricultural land uses in Hunterdon County.

The remaining conventional farming units such as dairy and cash grain operations have become more and more dependent on government subsidies to remain economically viable. Non-farm income has become a necessity for many farm families expecting to enjoy a normal lifestyle. The agricultural industry is necessarily supported by credit and the need for agricultural financing has remained fairly strong throughout the past decade as a result of new types of operations and higher prices paid for all farm inputs and land. Farm business management and consulting services provided by various financial institutions have become a necessity and an integral part of farm operations. Part-time farming for recreational purposes or supplemental income generation has increased dramatically during the past twenty-five years as large farms have been fragmented into smaller

units. This trend is counter to events in other agricultural areas in the nation. Hunterdon County has experienced an actual growth in farm numbers; however, most of these smaller farm units are actually supported by a healthy source of non-farm income.

During the early 1980s there developed an increased sense of concern over retention of agricultural land. Legislation was passed creating the State Agriculture Development Committee and County Agriculture Development Boards. These entities were charged with the responsibility of delineating prime agricultural lands and establishing areas that should be preserved as agricultural open space. Funding was made available by the State to assist the County and municipalities in purchasing development rights on selected properties. This program has been actively pursued and the benefits will assure the availability of land for the continuation of agricultural activities.

In summary, the traditional types of farming that existed in 1964 have diminished dramatically and been replaced with new types of farm operations that require limited land and are competitive in today's economic environment. These farms serve the consumer directly whenever possible, to secure the greatest financial return. The operators are keenly aware of their quality conscious customers and accordingly provide the quality they demand. Hunterdon County agriculture in 1989 is more customer-driven than at any time in the recent past. Today's Hunterdon County farmers have greater assurance that there will be an affordable land base from which to operate in the future due to the efforts of county and municipal leaders to preserve agricultural land as an integral part of the County's open space program.

## Agriculture, 2014

update by John Kuhl

**F**ifty years ago when the County marked its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the forerunner of this short history, County 4-H leader Bernard Ramsburg detailed Hunterdon's impressive agricultural past. Though the County's formerly huge poultry industry was even then in its death throes, the looming changes that would soon come were not yet apparent to the casual observer. Agriculture was yet king of the Hunterdon hill in 1964.

In the update of twenty-five years later, reporting from the perspective of a lifetime in farming and its financial aspects, George Conard concisely chronicled the sweeping changes that had occurred in that

short quarter century, changes that have exponentially accelerated since. Declining farm revenues, the grabbing up of land surrounding the proposed new major jetport that was never built, and the effects of opening I-78 had combined to do in agriculture as the County had known it.

Speaking from my own experience on local farms since early WW II, and a career in the commercial agriculture of the area, this whole new 2014 update could be summed up simply by just appending "more of the same" to George Conard's words of 1989. But it would seem that a little more is expected here.

Riding today's County roads and byways, the typical urban observers would see what they without hesitation would call agriculture. Most of the County is yet pleasantly green. In fact the County still has over 100,000 acres of farmland, 13.6% of the state's total. At least that many more acres are woodland. But under the surface, things are not the same. Many of the barns and other farm structures still stand, but if you look closely, a good number are empty and beginning to fall apart from the economic inability and the lack of incentive to maintain them. The farm family earning its total income off the general agriculture of its farm is an endangered species. To subsidize their farm income, many have had to resort to the higher wages and benefits available nearby in off-the-farm jobs. Much of today's farm ground is not tilled by those who own it, but by a few individuals farming enough big acreage to make efficient use of the large and extremely expensive farm machinery that today's economy demands. The landowners gain the benefit of preventing their ground from growing up wild, and of course the saving on their real estate taxes. Land (but not the buildings) that is farmed is eligible for reduced assessment. Though many homeowners are envious of these farm tax reductions, the fact remains that the average house in Hunterdon does not pay half enough taxes to send even one child to our schools, let alone fund the necessary County and municipal expenses needed for a viable community. A million dollar home in Union Township pays just a bit over \$20,000 in taxes. Even this amount is not enough to send one pupil to one of our local high schools. It is clearly evident that by forestalling more houses, every acre farmed is a benefit to all taxpayers.

Behind today's still imposing greenery lies an entirely new agricultural picture. In place of the former cows and chickens, you may see a pasture of grazing alpacas or llamas. You will certainly see goats and sheep. In Readington Township is a large buffalo meat operation marked by the tall, stout fences required to keep these strong animals in check. And you will see horses, lots of them, many sheltered



Readington River Farm was founded in 1995 by the Doyle family to produce allnatural buffalo meat, which is lower in cholesterol than beef. Photo from NJ.com

by some recent huge equine structures, as a number of horse owners have lately bought up preserved farm ground with outside money from non-ag sources, and at prices that make traditional farming cost-prohibitive. You may see some steers of varied colors but the 45 family dairy farms listed by George Conard in 1989 have dwindled in number to only five still shipping milk as this is written. That does not include the dairy herd at Mountain View Reformatory near Annandale, or the Cedar Lane farm of Johnson & Johnson money near Oldwick. But make no mistake; the dairy industry here is near moribund. Milk prices have just not been high enough to compensate for the higher local input costs. Perhaps most indicative of the current picture is a chart exhibited by the County Planning Department at a recent 4-H fair on the County fairgrounds at Ringoes. While it stated that Hunterdon still led the state in the acreage of hay and greenchop, its livestock inventory listed Hunterdon as ranking #1 in the state in the numbers of pigeons or squab, and #2 in pheasants, as well as #2 in horses and ponies. Our numbers of old traditional farm type animals lagged behind those of other counties, even in this agriculturally-challenged state.

As agriculture has evolved, we have lost the formerly large commercial infrastructure necessary to supply farm needs. Only Readington Farms still processes milk within the County and that lives primarily

on milk brought in from outside Hunterdon. While you can still get grists ground at Penwell, there is no longer an operating feed mill of note in the County. The separate firms of the Everitt family and of the Bond family near Ringoes still sell and service used and some new farm equipment. But there are no large brand-name dealers of ag equipment left here. Hunterdon still does retain its two fertilizer plants, that of Growmark (ex-Agway) in Bloomsbury and C.P.S. in Jutland. The continuing demand for plant food, seed, and pesticide needs for hay, corn, soybean and specialty crops has kept them in business, as they are the only two plants left in northern New Jersey.

Despite all the negatives above and the remarkable changes we have seen lately, agriculture does still maintain a prominent place in the County of today. We agricultural veterans may nostalgically regret what has been lost, but that is now history and there is little reason to expect its return. We have recently seen consumer retail take its lumps and much of the County's old industry has either closed down or shifted elsewhere in response to lower costs. Hunterdon is more than ever a bedroom community for the higher income folks who work in the urban areas to the east. But this does leave our new and different agriculture with a still considerable portion of the County's own local economic pie. Smaller suppliers have moved in to sell 50 pound paper bags of animal feed in place of the former bulk deliveries of the operating feed mills. The varied feed and supply needs of their new customers give opportunity for lesser volume but higher margin sales by these smaller dealers. Sergeantsville Grain & Feed is a typical example.

One area of traditional ag has held up strongly. Much of the area's past grain production was consumed by local animals. Now the animals are gone and the abundance is sent out of both the County and the country. Hunterdon's fertile soils (especially in the north) with the good management of the larger growers, now allow, without irrigation or unusual input, acreage yields of up to 200 bushels of shelled corn, and 70 bushels of wheat or soybeans. With the increased grain prices over the last several years this, for the time being at least, allows a survivable margin of profit, even after the significantly higher input costs. It is this development, plus the late collapse of the housing market, that more than anything else has kept Hunterdon green to date.

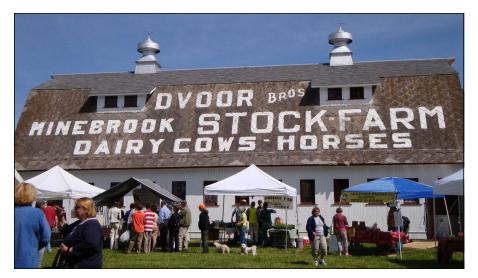
Probably the biggest type change over the last quarter century has been the growth of specialty crops. Sweet corn, tomatoes, beans, pumpkins, squash, flowers, apples, cider, strawberries and peaches are only a few of the locally grown crops available for sale along Hunterdon's roads at large farm markets all the way down to

single-crop farm stands. Seasonal farm markets have sprung up in a number of the County's towns. Pick-your-own pumpkins with Halloween farm tours on tractor-drawn wagons augmented by large. intricate corn mazes are popular around the County. Pick-your-own strawberries give others still another opportunity to sample the farm experience. Hunterdon has perhaps more Christmas tree growers than any other county in the state. A large number here offer the chance to pick and cut your own. People come here even from the city areas fifty miles away to get a fresh-cut tree and enjoy the holiday farm scene unavailable to them in their urban setting. These farm visits offer a unique opportunity to improve customer relations. The more non-farmers learn about farm operations, the less likely they are to impatiently complain about being caught on narrow back roads behind a huge, lumbering combine, baler, or spray rig. And, they may become more tolerant of the sights, sounds, and smells of agriculture that are not always compatible to the more refined senses of these urban spawned residents.

Hunterdon has always had its nurseries growing flowers, shrubs, and trees for the local trade but with the explosion of the housing market some years ago, a few growers "went large" to supply the bulk need of big developers and large retail outlets. They, too, have helped keep the County green and furthered the illusion of agriculture. One unsightly version of this is the growth of large greenhouse operations that supply plants to the bigger retail outlets. The water usage of this type operation is a dire threat to local aquifers, and one grower in particular, in Franklin Township, has arrogantly and continually disregarded the rules as far as soil conservation on land for which we taxpayers have laid out money to preserve. The unwillingness of local and state ag boards to take on the challenge of this operator is disappointing and extremely prejudicial to the County. It is a cancer that will surely spread if not checked.

The growing cost of energy from fossil fuels is pushing the development of alternatives. A few wind turbines already dot our landscape and even as this is written, a number of permits are being granted for large solar panel installations. Debate is currently on-going as to whether this is an activity properly classed as on-farm and/or appropriate to our area. Only time will tell. In future years Hunterdon's agriculture will continue to evolve in response to the ever-changing economic situations and demography confronting it. Some of the old will continue to fade away and new as-yet-unforeseen developments will undoubtedly appear in their place. We can say that the remarkable success of land preservation here has been a boon to the County and worth every penny it cost. We can hopefully expect that the innate urge of some die-hards to "farm the land" will help keep future

agriculture alive in some form or other, and the land somewhat green, for years to come. It would be fascinating to be able to read now, the next report, twenty-five or fifty years hence.



In 1920 Russian emigrant Jacob Dvoor purchased 40 acres of land and with his two younger brothers established the Dvoor Bros. Mine brook Stock Farm specializing in horses and dairy cows. The land was preserved in 1999 and is now the home of the Hunterdon Land Trust . It is also the site of a popular farmers' market that attracts over a thousand people every Sunday from May to November. Between 15 and 20 vendors who grow or make their own agricultural products offer fruits, vegetables, eggs, herbs, grass-fed meats, cheese, bread, wine, honey, live plants, alpaca woolens, and a variety of organic produce. Photo from Hunterdon Land Trust

### Communications, 1964

by Pauline Brown (Mrs. Frederick) Stothoff



Today's vast network of communications is indeed a far cry from the early days of the county, when there were no post offices, no telephone or telegraph, no radio or television and not even a newspaper. Ease of communication was at no time more apparent than in the last days of 1963, when the news flashed to the country and to the world of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Within minutes of the fatal shots, anyone at home, in industry, in school, or on the highway travelling, heard the news.

The only way the early resident of the county could send mail was to forward it by special messenger or by a friend. Receiving mail was even worse; months would go by before replies would come. When the post rider and the stage came, those who lived close by the routes could receive or send mail, but the people living in the back country were without means or direct mail connections. The situation was helped somewhat by the taverns serving as unofficial post offices. It was late in 1794 that Flemington, New Germantown and Pittstown received post offices. Other towns followed rapidly until the County had 26 of them in 1827. The post rider often carried letters for his own profit and delayed the mails while he transacted business on the way. Postmasters sometimes took advantage of the situation, especially those who were publishers, who would use the rider to circulate their own newspapers and see that no other papers were carried. Postal rates were high.

When the railroad came to the County, routes were changed and numerous mail contractors carried mail to parts of the county without rail service. In Snell's *History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties* the map of Hunterdon indicates that by 1880 there were approximately 50 towns, villages and hamlets in the county having post offices. When rural free delivery was established, many of these rural post offices were abolished. More than one rueful remark was heard to the effect that rural free delivery took various villages and hamlets right off the map.

Parcel post, and the attendant mail order house and dog-eared mail

catalog in many homes, was instituted after 1913. Today, the average family is besieged with all manner of mail, undreamed of even fifty years ago.

In the earlier days of the county, when means of communication were very few, the tavern or inn played an important role in the shaping of the county's history. Taverns were recognized as being a definite need for the convenience of travelers, for the transacting of business, both public and private, and a place for men of a community to congregate.

A number of ferry owners petitioned for tavern licenses to accommodate ferry users. Emanuel Coryell, at present Lambertville, built a tavern soon after he purchased the ferry there. The site was a short distance below the present Lambertville-New Hope bridge. There also was a tavern near the ferry landing at Frenchtown at a very early date. At Point Pleasant Ferry, Aaron Warford in 1779 wrote a petition, saying in part, "There is a public landing where much business is carried on....by reason Whereof Vast Numbers of people are Collected together many of who are Detained there for several days together and are Exposed to the Inclemency of the weather or Else imposed upon the neighborhood for want of a Convenient House of Public Entertainment." Along the Delaware, the ferry and the tavern evidently existed almost side by side in those early days.

A second reason was sometimes given in support of a license petition. The owner of a house at Reaville in 1779 asked for a license on the grounds that he was besieged with travelers stranded on the Old York Road when the ford at the Neshanic Creek was impassable during the winter season.

Several taverns in present Hunterdon County are mentioned in diaries of travelers as their stopping-off places. Hickory Tavern, on the road from Pittstown to Bloomsbury, was visited by an Elizabeth Drinker in 1765. Her diary indicated that after a particularly tiresome trip up Musconetcong Mountain, they stopped at Hickory Tavern, "where we stayed all night, and fared very poorly." Cahill's Tavern at Quakertown, according to the diary of one William Ellery in 1779, passed the "bug" test: "Our beds here were clean and not infested with bugs."

Several taverns were the meeting places where were fomented the hatreds toward the British prior to the Revolutionary War. Here the men could express their indignations towards the hated Stamp Act, and other oppressions perpetrated by the British. John Ringo's tavern at Ringoes was the scene of many meetings of the rebellious patriots, who in 1766 organized the Sons of Liberty for Hunterdon County. After the repeal of the Stamp Act they disbanded, but were

revived during the Revolution under the name, Society of Whigs, meeting again at Ringo's.

Many tavern keepers performed a "useful" function for the patriotic cause. One petition for a tavern near Baptistown, stated in part "Should your Worship grant him a license to keep a Public House it will be in his power to be more Useful." The petitioner had most likely heard remarks dropped in unguarded moments by patrons of the bar and had conveyed the information to the proper authorities. Bonnell's Tavern at Hunt's Mills (now Clinton) was the meeting place for local inhabitants who organized, in 1775, a regiment of "minute men" there. The meeting had been called by Charles Stewart, delegate to the Provincial Congress of New Jersey. Jones' Tayern at Clinton was also one of the recruiting stations for the militia of Hunterdon County. Other famous early taverns were Van Sickle's Tavern, near High Bridge; the White House Tavern; Fleming's Tavern in Flemington; and Rittenhouse Tavern at Rosemont. The Old York Road stage overnight stop was at The Three Bridges Inn, later at Flemington. Stops were made to discharge and pick up passengers at other taverns along the routes.

Local patrons of these early inns and taverns came for news of the outside world as well as for food and lodging. When newspapers first appeared, the inn was almost the only place to see them. By the time everyone had read a paper, it was quite dilapidated. Sometimes a good reader would read it aloud to the patrons of the inn. For those newspaper subscribers who desired to have express riders carry their papers, designated taverns were available where they could sign the rider's "subscrip

-tion paper."
Such an accommodation was afforded by Cahill's Tavern at Ouakertown.

An event of the season at the tavern was the arrival of the tax collector. Villagers came to see him and made a holiday out of the occasion. Public meetings were

The Saxonville Tavern was built in three sections, c. 1810, 1820, 1835 (right, middle, left). It is seen here in 1939 before its gallery porch was lost in the 1950s to a widened Route 29. It served as a gathering place and news hub for the village of Raven Rock until 1860 when it became a private residence. In 2007, it sold to the State Green Acres program. Photo from the Hunterdon County Historical Society



commonly held at the tavern. In many ways Hunterdon County residents used their taverns as a vital means for communicating with their fellow men. In 1848, the county had 61 licensed taverns.

The telegraph came early to the county, for in 1845 the Magnetic Telegraph Company put its line from Philadelphia across the Delaware at Lambertville. It followed the Old York Road to Newark and eventually was carried on to New York. The 1909 Flemington Board of Trade booklet says the telegraph company operated "Offices here for business throughout this country and cable service to all parts of the world". Connections were given to Flemington in 1855 and to the Delaware River town in 1868. All villages along the railroads eventually had telegraph service.

Who could live without the telephone? Many times one wishes wistfully that it were possible to do so; however, only in jest would one minimize the tremendous importance of this vital link with the world. Early telephones were noisy, and they scared horses and fascinated the county residents, who found they could talk with someone in another town "all day if you want to". This was announced in the *Hunterdon County Democrat* on September 15, 1885, in relation to the hookup between Lambertville and Flemington by an affiliate of the Bell Telephone Company.

Local telephone companies, which had started up because of the high rate charged by Bell, joined together under Asa B. Reading, an electric company lineman, who later became operator of an independent local company under franchise of Hiram E. Deats. Mr. Deats once said of Reading, "I don't know how he did it, but he even used barbed wire fence on the farms as telephone wire."

Other companies, the Farmers and Merchants Telephone Co. and the Lebanon Telephone Company, brought lines throughout Hunterdon County. All three lines came into Flemington, and if one wanted complete service it was necessary to have three telephones in one's home. Fortunately the three companies were finally consolidated in 1931.

Today the New Jersey Telephone Co. at Flemington has twelve exchanges serving 21,300 telephones.

Radio and television as a means of communication have been somewhat more indirect, but quite important to the lives of the county's residents during recent decades. Radio has brought news, weather and farm reports and entertainment.

Television brings plays, soap operas, quiz shows, variety shows, documentaries and a potpourri of sounds. Undoubtedly both radio and television affect greatly our buying habits. One need only look

at the rooftops of houses for telltale antennae to realize how many of the county's residents are influenced daily by the medium of television.

Many newspapers have appeared on the Hunterdon scene through the years from 1825 to the present. Stories, essays, poems were geared to affect the emotions rather than the intellect of the readers. Heavy borrowing from other newspapers was the rule. Such local news as was printed was almost purely political. The Civil War gave editors an opportunity to communicate with their readers by printing the letters of soldiers at the front. Editorials reflected a sympathetic attitude toward the families of the soldiers. Hunterdon County residents throughout the Civil War increased their newspaper reading, and the added interest in news brought more newspapers into publication. All local matters, whether of great or little importance, were read with much interest. Residents were experiencing the personal satisfaction of seeing themselves in print.

Prior to the First World War, residents were caught up in a whirl of macadam road-building, automobiles, first wireless, new-fangled telephones and the like. The newspapers gave increasing coverage to local developments; but when the war began, for most people it was too far removed to be of much consequence. Newspapers of that period indicate that the county editors were somewhat unprepared to relate fully the world-shaking events in that they lacked knowledge of the countries where the war was being fought. Readers also had little knowledge of Europe's lands. County editors suggested that they read the Philadelphia and New York papers, and peruse the war news bulletins which were received by the postoffice for posting. In addition the editors did give a recital of war preparations at home, and letters from soldiers at the front were again printed after we entered the war. Editors were forced to inform themselves as to the economic and other effects of the war.

In the years after World War I, journalism of a more modern order became the rule. Local news was more adequately and accurately reported, and at the same time the relation of the county to world events became an integral part of the county newspaper. Today's county papers contain information which appeals to many types of readers. For those engaged in agricultural pursuits, valuable material is contained. In addition, gardening of all types, home care and household information receive regular attention. Editorials reflect the economic, political, and social views of the times. Items of historical interest and those concerned with social and current events are written for the edification and enjoyment of the Hunterdon County reader.

During the first one hundred and twenty-five years of its existence, the area now comprising Hunterdon County had no newspaper of its own, though some of its residents subscribed to Philadelphia newspapers. The Philadelphia monopoly was ended by the establishment of a paper in Trenton during the Revolution. The first newspaper in present Hunterdon County was the *Hunterdon Gazette*, first published on March 24, 1825. The editor, Charles George, borrowed freely from other papers. Publishing was discontinued in 1832, and it was in 1838 that the *Gazette* was revived by John S. Brown, a new editor.

The *Gazette* contained very little news of the county; in fact, county news went almost unreported. Ghastly murder stories, steamboat accidents, news of uprising in foreign countries, pages with advice to young men and young ladies, Victorian poetry, essays on "mother love" and the like made up its content. Advertisements were largely from the Philadelphia patent medicine makers, though some local advertising was done.

A rival newspaper, the *Hunterdon Democrat*, appeared on the scene in 1838, and months later the *Gazette* began to campaign against the newcomer. For several years, at intervals, the two editors, Brown of the *Gazette*, and George C. Seymour of the *Democrat*, used their editorial columns to excoriate each other in terms increasingly ugly and bitter until Brown left the *Gazette* in 1843.

The newspaper under Brown, despite the unpleasantness of the repartee between him and Seymour, was of better caliber than under the new editor, Henry C. Buffington. During the next few years both papers, as a matter of fact, seemed apathetic, although now the name-calling was between Buffington and Seymour. When the new Republican party emerged, Buffington, as a Whig, could have gone over to it as many Whig newspapers did. However, he sold out to Willard Nichols, who went over to the American or Know-Nothing party. The *Gazette*, at least partly because of Nichols extremism, lost readers, and was sold at sheriff's sale to Adam Suydam, in 1858.

J. Rutsen Schenck purchased the *Gazette* during the Civil War, editing it until 1866. He supported both the President's policies and the conduct of the War. He had little to say about the censorship of newspapers and other war powers of the President. As an editor, Schenck was too mild for the times he lived in. The War and the home front were editorialized and reported with a somewhat detached viewpoint. Nevertheless, it was a more lively paper than the *Hunterdon Democrat* at this time. In 1866 Charles Tomlinson became the owner of the *Gazette* and transformed it into a Democratic paper. One day the newspaper came upon the scene as *The* 

*Democrat*. The date of July 3, 1867, marked the end of the career of *The Democrat* as such, when it and the *Hunterdon Democrat* disappeared, and the first copy of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* made its debut in the county.

The first issue of the *Hunterdon Democrat* had appeared on September 5, 1838, and Editor Seymour had let it be known there in that the paper would always subscribe to the principles of the Democratic party. As mentioned previously, this paper became a rival to the *Gazette*. An example of the political bickering of the two editors is shown by their editorials at the time when there was a movement to revise the antiquated New Jersey Constitution of 1776. In 1852 Seymour sold out to Adam Bellis, a staunch Democrat. Through the Civil War the *Democrat* followed the fortunes of the Union Armies rather closely. It never liked Lincoln; it supported the Union, but said the war was badly conducted. It strongly opposed the President's powers of censoring newspapers, and was most bitter about the re-election of Lincoln in 1864. The *Democrat* gave full coverage to the news of the assassination of President Lincoln, but could not avoid censure for its former criticisms of the President.

On July 3, 1867, the *Hunterdon Democrat*, together with the *Democrat* (formerly the *Gazette*) disappeared from the scene, and the first edition of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* came into being, as noted above. The new *Democrat* had some local coverage. Today, however, it would be considered small and ineffectual. Some use was made of the telegraph for limited coverage of world news. Its new local editor, Lewis Runkle, appeared to have been one of the first fine examples of the local reporter, and his influence on reporting in Hunterdon County would be felt for nearly a half century. Robert J. Killgore became editor about October 5, 1865, for many years thereafter to be one of the chief editors in the county.

Around the turn of the century Anthony Killgore, son of Robert Killgore, became editor. During the younger Killgore's editorship, the front page received a new face. Heretofore a heterogeneous collection of serial stories, agricultural news, jokes and the like, it now featured the news stories of correspondents throughout the county, although eye-catching headlines were not used to a great extent. Mr. Killgore continued to serve as editor until 1922, when Alex L. Moreau and D. Howard Moreau became the owners of the *Democrat*.

In 1926 the *Democrat-Advertiser*, which had been published in Flemington since 1881, was purchased by the *Hunterdon County Democrat*. The *Democrat* was one of the first weekly New Jersey papers to become a member of the Associated Press in 1929.

The Democrat purchased The Frenchtown Star in 1932, which it

renamed the *Delaware Valley News*. In 1949 the *Milford Leader* was also purchased and combined with the *Delaware Valley News*.

Following the death of Mr. A.L. Moreau in 1933, Mr. D. Howard Moreau became sole owner of the *Hunterdon County Democrat*. The *Democrat* has been the recipient of numerous awards for advertising and for editorial excellence. Nationwide news is always reported from the angle of its effects upon Hunterdon County and its residents. Mr. Moreau loaned his entire farm page to the *Hunterdon Republican* each week in order that farm news be circulated throughout the county as much as possible.

The *Hunterdon County Democrat*, under the capable leadership of Mr. Moreau, became a truly local newspaper. Dr. Hubert G. Schmidt, in his forward to his book, *The Press in Hunterdon County*, says that the *Democrat* played a "considerable part in bringing unity to the county. By consistent county-wide news coverage, it has made the people feel a 'togetherness' unknown before." Mr. Moreau gave to the paper its excellent quality of editorial independence, which had made the paper one of the finest county papers in the country.

The passing of Mr. Moreau on June 7, 1963, was felt with sorrow by persons throughout the county in many walks of life. He communicated to his readers a depth of vision and a breadth of thought and introspection of the highest quality. His keen interest in the history of the county did not deter him from ever seeking more modern method of communicating news to the reading pubic.

Shortly after the *Hunterdon Gazette* endorsed the American party in 1856, a new paper appeared on the scene, the *Hunterdon Republican*, under the editorship of Thomas E. Bartow. During the early years of the *Republican* its standards relative to literary quality and ethics were high. Bartow introduced a column of news by telegraph, probably through one of the early news services. The election of 1860, as mentioned heretofore, caused great excitement in the county, which was essentially Democratic. With Abraham Lincoln's victory, the elation of Bartow was complete, even though his party had lost in the county.

At the start of the Civil War the *Republican* had no problem about choosing sides, as did the rival Democratic papers. Its coverage of the war was quite haphazard, but it did manage to convey a moderately good picture of the home front. Bartow in 1863, sold out to George A. Allen. At that time a William Callis, formerly one of Bartow's cub reporters, became right-hand man to Allen and a minority shareowner. Callis acquired sole interest in 1872, and held it until 1910.

Following the Civil War, county residents wanted to forget the horrors of battle and bloodshed. But within a few years the glory of it all had returned and the memory of the gore was forgotten. The *Republican* in 1870 played up the unveiling of a statue to the Civil War dead of Lambertville and Delaware Township as big news. During the early 1900's the *Republican* followed the trend of satisfying the reading public in their demand for local news.

During the years prior to the Second World War the Republican continued to fill a need in Flemington and the county. However, following the Second World War, the paper ran into financial difficulties. Flemington and Hunterdon County were simply unable to support two newspapers in such close proximity, and the *Republican* went out of business in 1951, after long years of news service to the county.

Publication of the *Democrat-Advertiser* began in 1881 by George C. Hughes, as it was then known as the *Hunterdon-Advertiser*. The name was changed to the *Democrat-Advertiser* in 1883, when the paper was sold to John N. Jones and John N. Voorhees, as editors and publishers. Lewis Runkle, mentioned previously as local editor of the *Democrat* for forty years, was given a job, and was to spend fifteen more years in the newspaper business. He certainly can be considered the "grand old man" of the nineteenth century in Hunterdon County newspaper circles.

The *Democrat-Advertiser* made an effort to please people by giving wide coverage of the First World War—praising the Wilson administration, printing soldiers' letters, and the like. Price spirals in 1917 were noted and shortages reported. The *Democrat-Advertiser* followed the other papers in its emotional appeal and later on in its propagandizing against the Germans. Patriotism was expounded everywhere—flying flags, patriotic organizations, committees for home defense, sacrifices as to food and fuel.

After the Armistice, which came sooner than the editors had expected, the *Democrat-Advertiser* was in something of a rut, for all news now seemed tame. The paper changed hands several times, and proved to be a loser to each owner. In 1925 it was absorbed by the *Hunterdon County Democrat*.

The Lambertville Beacon, beginning as the Telegraph, was first published in 1844 by John R. Swallow who had owned the Hunterdon Gazette during Buffington's first year. After several years, Swallow, evidently possessed of an adventuresome spirit, left for the West. Edwin G. Clark, the new editor later sold out to F.P. Sellers, who named the paper the Beacon. This paper and the New Jersey Leader in Clinton were the only ones in the County outside of Flemington at the end of the Civil War. In November, 1869, Clark Pier-

son, the owner, sold the paper to K.P. Hazen and I.S. Roberts, thereby initiating the long reign of the Hazen family. The *Leader* ended publication in June of 1865.

The *Beacon* eventually gained a large following in the south part of the county. In 1895 it was called "clean, conservative, prosperous" by the *Hunterdon County Democrat*. In 1917 editor Phineas K. Hazen, after more than forty years at the helm, turned the paper over to his son. Today the owner and publisher is John C. Hazen.

The Frenchtown Star began as a monthly paper, but became a weekly in 1879. In 1890 William Sipes was listed in the New Jersey Legislative Manual as the editor. This paper was absorbed by the Democrat in 1932. The Milford Leader started early in 1880, as evidenced by the good wishes of Lewis Runkle, local editor of the Democrat, to its editor. Mart D.L. Srope, later to be sheriff of Hunterdon County, became the owner in 1883. The 1890 Manual listed George B. Corson as proprietor, and Samuel H. Bast as editor. This paper was also purchased by the Democrat in 1949, and both papers were combined as the Delaware Valley News.

The *Hunterdon Review* began publishing as the *Weekly Review* around the turn of the century at Whitehouse. It was started by a member of the Shampanore family, publishers of the *Family Casket* at Whitehouse at an earlier time. Today the publisher is Frederick R. Shampanore III. The paper covers county news, but specializes in items of interest to residents of the northern part.

The *High Bridge Gazette*, known until 1917 as the *Hunterdon Gazette*, was established in 1880. Now published by John Waterfield, it contains news mostly indigenous to northern Hunterdon.

Throughout the years, for various reasons, obviously at times not entirely for profit, other newspapers and journals, monthly, semimonthly, weekly and even daily, have been published. Some failed quickly; others managed to survive for longer periods.

Lambertville seems to have nurtured publishers. In addition to the *Beacon*, half a dozen other papers were begun there. The *Lambert-ville Press*, considered a superior paper for its time, 1858, failed after two years. The *News*, a penny sheet published for a time after 1869, helped to prevent the *Beacon* from growing. Its editor, one Benjamin Joiner, was called a "low printer" by Lewis Runkle, local editor of the *Democrat*. The *Lambertville Record*, listed in 1890 in the *New Jersey Legislative Manual*, lasted until 1917, when it was sold to Jesse Hunt, job printer. It is now published by Gordon Cooper. The turn of the century saw an increase in new publications, among them the *Democratic Wage Worker*, edited by one Kearns in 1898.

Two other papers failed, the *Lambertville Argus* in 1908 and the *Lambertville Evening News*. The latter was a valiant effort by someone to publish a daily paper, but lasted only two weeks. A paper called the *Stockton Advance* published at the office of the *New Hope News* around 1900, terminated operations in 1903.

The *Frenchtown Press* was being published around 1872, and seems to have bothered Lewis Runkle in its editorial content. The *Hunterdon Independent*, which began operations in Frenchtown in 1870, was bought and combined with the *Hunterdon Republican* during World War II. Somewhere around 1908 an inspirational monthly magazine, *The Morning Cometh*, was being edited in Frenchtown by the Rev. William Porter Townsend.

The name Larison, famous in Hunterdon County, figures in the publishing in 1858 of a military paper, the *Military Review*, the editor and publisher being Dr. George W. Larison. The Historical Society has copies of this paper in its cases. Another famous gentlemen, Dr. C.W. Larison, published a monthly paper *Ringo* in 1890, devoted to local history and to a phonetic system of spelling. At first glance the spelling of words is disconcerting, but it becomes more sensible after one peruses a few paragraphs of this little paper. It was carried on, without profit, for two or three years. That the editor of the *Monitor* at Ringoes in 1887 did not practice what he preached is evidenced by the fact that during the time he was the purveyor of church and congregational news of the Presbyterian Church at Ringoes, he was arrested as a horse thief.

Flemington had a few papers in addition to its larger ones. The late Hiram E. Deats published a paper, *The Jerseyman*, from 1891 until 1905, originally literary in tone. Gradually it became a journal of local history, containing much genealogical information.

A temperance paper, *The Home Visitor*, was printed in Glen Gardner in 1883 by an ardent prohibitionist minister at Quakertown, the Rev. Cornelius Clark, Jr. After the paper was bought in 1885 by a Clinton dentist, Lew Runkle remarked that the paper had a new home, and that it was going to make "bloody, devastating war upon whiskey, beer, wine, and cider." A *Home Visitor*, probably the same, later was published at Flemington, ceasing publication in 1899.

The rather odd name, *The Family Casket*, was chosen by Editor Andrew Jackson Shampanore for his paper at Whitehouse in the 1860s. He seems to anger Mr. Runkle by "lifting" articles from the *Democrat*. In 1877 the paper was leased to a Frenchtown printer, and in 1878 Shampanore moved it to Bound Brook. *The Family Casket*, whatever its virtues and failings, was nevertheless a very popular paper. The *Whitehouse Monitor*, a weekly, was mentioned in 1888 as a

recent publication, but did not last long.

The year 1857 saw the publishing of a paper known as the *Clinton Times*. This paper was discontinued in 1864. In 1890, the *Clinton Democrat* was begun by John Carpenter, Jr. It began two issues per week in May, of 1904. During the Second World War this paper was combined with the *Hunterdon Republican*. Upon the demise of the *Republican*, the circulation of the Clinton paper was absorbed by the *Hunterdon County Democrat*.

An editor, E.W. Rush, decided upon the name *Glen Gardner Avalanche* for his semi-monthly paper in 1884. In 1916, after 32 years of publishing, Editor Rush thought about suspending operations for lack of readers, but, on second thought, decided to go on. For how long, we do not know.

Bloomsbury had a newspaper of its own, the *Bloomsbury Weekly Messenger*, for about 6 months in 1887. Like many an editor in Hunterdon through the years, the editor of this little paper found that newspaper success depends on more than good intention.

# Communications, 1989 update by Edward J. Mack

Today, dozens of modern postal facilities dot the county, many new Post Offices having been constructed or older ones expanded in the past 25 years to meet the growing demands for service from "information age" industries such as New York Life Insurance, whose national computer center is located in Clinton Township, close to the borough of Lebanon.

The cluster of industries in Flemington and Raritan Township put millions of pieces of mail through that first class post office each year and the population explosion throughout Hunterdon has caused a huge increase in the number of residential routes in every part of the county. The introduction of "Express Mail" has put everyone in Hunterdon in touch with any part of the United States on an overnight delivery basis—for a price. Special receptacles for "Express Mail" can be found in most of the larger municipalities and the response, according to Postal officials, has been strong.

Private companies such as Federal Express, United Parcel Service, and Emery Air Freight provide 16-to-24-hour delivery service of packages to all parts of the country and to overseas destinations as well. Retail outlets which specialize in preparing packages for ship-

ment have sprung up in parts of Hunterdon in response to the demand for help in this growing specialization.

Today, the United Telephone Company of New Jersey provides service to 24 of the county's 26 municipalities (Lambertville area and Milford are served by New Jersey Bell, now a part of Bell Atlantic, a regional telephone company). United Telephone by early 1989, had more than 49,700 phone lines in place with well over 100,000 telephone instruments in use daily. In addition, hundreds of offices, stores and business locations have installed facsimile machines and linked computer services which rely on telephone lines to carry written and electronic messages to their far-flung destinations in seconds.

More than 375 employees of United Telephone service Hunterdon and 90% of the equipment in the county is electronic, having replaced electro-mechanical equipment during the late 1970's and early 1980's. Conversion of more remote exchanges is scheduled for the 1990's. Long distance service is no longer the province of a single provider. Customers in Hunterdon may select from several companies, including AT&T, MCI and U.S. Sprint who compete vigorously in the market, basing their appeal on price and service variables.

Cable television came to Hunterdon in the early 1980s and provided service by the end of the decade to nearly half the homes in the county. Originally sought after because of the clearer picture it provided some, cable grew more attractive when it became capable of providing dozens of added channels offering a wide variety of one topic services such as sports, news, music videos, health programming and current movie and theater offerings.

In addition, cable became an advertising medium for hundreds of businesses in the county that can now insert spots and longer commercials in special breaks provided on cable programs.

Special local access channels have afforded opportunities for the development of limited local programming including high school sports, local government meetings, occasional community forums, and other county and local activities lending themselves to ease of production. The high cost of television production has limited the development of locally sponsored and locally created programming, but more is expected in the future.

H. Seely Thomas Jr. became publisher of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* upon the death of Mr. Moreau and continued development of the newspaper over the next 25 years. Thomas, Moreau's son-in-law, hired Edward J. Mack, a veteran weekly newspaperman, as editor of the newspaper in late 1965. A period of accelerated growth of the

newspaper ensued as the publication modernized its equipment, built new facilities in Raritan Township and enlarged the news staff to meet the growing demand for coverage of governmental affairs and community news.

By the later 1980s, the newspaper had grown past 26,000 in paid circulation and was the largest paid circulation weekly in New Jersey. Its sister newspaper, the *Delaware Valley News*, counted more than 5,300 paid weekly subscribers, and the combination provided a dominant print advertising medium for the county and nearby areas. The Democrat published close to 90 pages on a regular weekly basis, including a usual run of 32 to 36 pages of classified advertising. This section runs in both newspapers.

Reflecting the tradition of family ownership, Mr. Thomas was joined in the mid-1980s in the publication of the newspapers by his three children, including his daughter Catherine, who handled design and artwork; his elder son, John, who became circulation manager, and Howard the youngest family member, who headed the promotion and community relations operations of the newspaper. Catherine's husband, Jay Langley, became editor in 1988, while Mack rejoined the newspaper in 1989 as general manager after a four-year stint in television broadcasting and production. Anne Thomas, the publisher's wife, has been the newspaper's food editor for the past 30 years. The newspaper repeatedly won top awards in news, advertising and circulation competition among both dailies and weeklies in New Jersey during the most recent 25 years.

The *Democrat* launched a free circulation newspaper, the *Hunterdon Observer*, in August 1987, covering every residence in Hunterdon County and providing advertisers with the ability to target market their messages and special sections to any part of the county. The publication is distributed on Saturdays by mail and often contains weekend advertising circulations and other publications aimed at all or parts of the Hunterdon market.

Raymond Von Culin, who had purchased the *Hunterdon Review* in the mid-1960s from the Shampanore family, sold it in 1969 to Recorder Publications, a group of weekly newspapers owned by Cortland and Nancy Parker, themselves family publishers. The *Review's* editorial and news offices were moved from Whitehouse Station in the mid 1970s to expanded facilities in Clinton Town where they continue to operate.

The Parkers, whose hometown newspaper is the *Bernardsville News*, invested in the development of the *Review*, providing added staff to the news department, promotional support and a strong advertising sales team to insure its stability in a sharply competitive market.

The *High Bridge Gazette* was acquired in the early 1970s by the Parkers and incorporated into the *Review*.

The decades of the 70s and 80s saw several other publications started in Hunterdon and some survive today. *Today in Hunterdon*, a bi-weekly television guide, seems to have won a permanent place in the market, while the *Flemington Family News*, after an ambitious start, has been struggling in the closing years of the decade and its fate is yet to be decided. The *Voice of Hunterdon* has been circulating as a free newspaper published in the Whitehouse area for the past four years while *Hunterdon Profile* was started in the Flemington area but ceased publication in mid-1989.

The *Lambertville Beacon* was sold in July by Joseph Hazen, who succeeded his father, John, as publisher in the late 1960s. The newspaper was acquired by Packet Publications of Princeton, publishers of nine community newspapers in and adjacent to the Princeton market. Typographical changes, a hefty boost in advertising and a strong circulation campaign were some of the immediate effects on the *Beacon* of the infusion of talent, energy, and money brought by the Princeton group to Hunterdon County's only city.

Another newspaper group, Intercounty Publications, launched a new weekly, the *Lambertville Sun*, in August 1989, providing free distribution to Lambertville, West Amwell, East Amwell and Stockton. A lively and colorful tabloid, the *Sun* has begun to develop a paid circulation base although no figures were available in the months following its initial publication. Intercounty quickly acquired another weekly, the *Pennington Post*, in nearby Mercer County, to provide advertisers with an additional means of reaching adjacent markets.

The seemingly volatile market for newspapers in Hunterdon was a reflection of what was happening throughout New Jersey during the 1980's when large national newspaper groups began buying up publications from long-time family owners. The increased competition also drove several daily newspapers out of business during this period, including both the *Shrewsbury Register* and the *North Jersey Advance* of Dover during 1989.

The late 1980s also marked the entry of Malcolm Forbes, millionaire publisher of *Forbes* magazine, a national business publication, into the weekly newspaper field in nearby Somerset County. Forbes acquired the *Somerset Messenger-Gazette* of Somerville in 1987 and quickly added other weeklies through acquisitions and start-ups. The latest count of Forbes Newspapers was 14 in October of 1989, including publications in Morris, Somerset, Union, and Middlesex Counties. A Hunterdon County resident, John O'Brien of Kingwood Township and a former classified advertising manager of the *Hunter-*

don County Democrat, was named president of Forbes Newspapers in October 1989.

## Communications, 2014

update by Jay Langley

Changes, challenges, and a considerable amount of confusion have marked the years since 1989, when Ed Mack wrote the preceding update. During this period, the "computer age" has matured and its innovations are changing everything. Computers and their offshoots, the so-called smart phones and portable tablets, have gone from being mere tools that assist us – to being the technologies that shape and drive entire new industries.

In 1989, Ed was general manager of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* newspapers, where I had succeeded him in 1987 as executive editor. A big broadsheet, the *Democrat* was Hunterdon County's paper of record. At that time it averaged 76 to 96 pages per week – all of it local content. I used to keep count, and an average issue of the *Democrat* carried about 350 local news articles and features, photos, obituaries, columns, wedding announcements and other social items, and letters to the editor. People lined up at newsstands on Wednesday evenings and waited to get a copy, hot off the press. Hundreds of youngsters got their first work experiences as carriers for the *Democrat*. Many of us got our first real, adult jobs as reporters, in advertising sales, as graphic artists, or as office and production workers – and that's how we learned the ways of the world.

Supported by revenue from a bulging classified advertising section, the *Democrat* covered all 26 of Hunterdon's municipalities, either in its own pages or in those of its sister paper, the *Delaware Valley News*. Residents in northern Hunterdon had a choice for local coverage in the *Hunterdon Review*, a smaller weekly paper that covers those communities. In south Hunterdon, readers could choose between the *Democrat* and the *Lambertville Beacon* for local news. County government and a few municipalities were covered, also, by four daily papers from outside Hunterdon: *The Star-Ledger*, based in Newark; the *Courier News* in Bridgewater; the *Trenton Times*; and the *Easton Express*.

Several smaller, free-distribution weeklies came and went through the years. Every now and then someone would start up a magazine, but those came and went, too. Two small radio stations served segments of the population. In addition, Hunterdon Central High School had a student-run radio station and in the 1990s started a student-run cable TV studio. The other regional high schools followed suit.

The big news in communications in Hunterdon over the last quarter century has been similar to that elsewhere across the nation. Over the last decade, in particular, growth of Internet advertising has eroded the classified ad base of newspapers at the same time that deep, national recessions (2001-2003 and 2007-2011) slashed automotive, real estate, and retail advertising. This devastating combination jolted the underpinnings of every newspaper's tried-and-true business model in ways that other threats had not – not the advent of radio, not network television, not cable TV, not satellite communications. Newspapers have had to shrink their staffs, their expenses, and their contents to stay within very much tighter revenue budgets.

Newspapers fought back by starting successful websites, but those revenues have not yet replaced what was lost, and few analysts believe that will happen soon. The big opportunity at present is to develop a local business model for computers and mobile devices – such as laptops, tablets, and "smart phones" – that will bring in the revenue needed to support news-gathering on anything like the old scale. That is, if today's population wants it.

I say that because, over this same period, Hunterdon County's population has changed – increased certainly, but changed in character, as well. Through its recorded history, the county was rural in nature and separate from urban New Jersey, with an independent, local focus. But by the late 1980s Hunterdon was digesting its third big wave of post-WW II development, this one brought about by the completion of Interstate Route 78 across the northern third of the County.

Commuters followed the highway, buying up homes, townhouses, and condos. The old pastures, fields, and dirt lanes simply disappeared from view. The new residents tended to bring new buying habits and market preferences with them. And fewer of them worked locally, which further changed the landscape. They were less interested in local businesses, local news, and local institutions. Big chain stores began to follow their customers to Hunterdon; smaller local establishments faced more difficult circumstances. The new businesses advertised less locally, which exacerbated the challenges to newspapers.

In 2001 the Thomas family sold the *Hunterdon County Democrat* newspapers to NJN Publishing, which is a company in the Advance publishing hierarchy, owned by the Newhouse family. Late in 2011 the publisher of the *Princeton Packet* newspapers announced that its operation, including the *Lambertville Beacon*, was for sale. Still

holding on is the Parker family, owners of Recorder Publishing and the *Hunterdon Review*. Daily newspapers have changed, too. Both the *Trenton Times* and the *Easton Express* have been added to Advance's holdings, whose flagship operations in New Jersey are *The Star-Ledger* and a large online news site – NJ.com. The Gannett chain, owner of the *Courier News*, has merged that operation with others in its chain.

The Postal Service also has been challenged by changing technology and changing customer habits. The growth of email has shrunk the use of first-class mail and has cut the revenue it traditionally generated. Private delivery services such as UPS and Fed Ex have siphoned off lucrative parcel post and business deliveries. Cuts in postal staff and service are being debated in Washington at this writing, with closings threatened for many smaller post offices.

Telephone service has changed dramatically in recent years, with "smart phones" seemingly in every pocket and purse. These little computers offer many services and applications, or "apps," in addition to communication by voice and texting. One result of the explosion in mobile phones is a decrease in the number and use of land lines. Another is the almost complete disappearance of coin-operated pay telephones and the phone booths that once stood in many public places.

Communication in the 21st century is fast with smart phones accessing the Internet, instant messaging, texting, tweeting, and worst case scenario: having to wait for overnight delivery. Photos from (left) activerain.com; (right) videohive.net



# Education, 1964

by Frank E. Burd



Prior to 1700, settlers in what is now Hunterdon were few and far between. Shortly after this, English and German immigrants began to appear in the Amwell valley, and Dutch, followed by Germans, crossed into Northern Hunterdon from Somerset County. Dutch settlers established a church near the Readington border in 1719. The small sanctuary was destroyed by fire about 1738 and was rebuilt near its present site in Readington village. Quakers also were coming in, possibly encouraged by John Reading, who had taken up land in the vicinity of present day Stockton and Rosemont. The latter were never as numerous as the others, having but one society, the Kingwood Meeting at Quakertown. But other English settlers of various religious persuasions had been coming in from the start.

The German settlers were attached to the Reformed and the Lutheran churches, and the Dutch to the Dutch Reformed Church. These had an educated clergy who were much concerned over the matter of providing some sort of education for the children. It is to these German and Dutch dominies that we must give credit for encouraging the setting up of the first schools. Often they did the teaching, especially among the older pupils who showed particular ability. The Quakers were not so fortunately situated. They maintained no clergy as such. But that they were concerned about the matter of educating their children is shown by this excerpt from the minutes of one of their monthly meetings held at Quakertown in 1752:

We have likewise considered the proposal for settling a school, but being very few of us and so remote from each other and some of us under low circumstances, so that it seems unlikely to us that we shall be able to raise a sufficient salary to support such school, otherwise we should be very free and hearty to join with the proposal, believing it would in some good degree answer the good purpose intended.

Definite sources of information regarding the very first schools are

scarce. David Murray, in his *History of Education in New Jersey* and Nelson R. Burr, in his *Education in New Jersey*, *1631-1831* give pretty fair ideas of what these first schools were like. It seems reasonable to assume that what applied to the province as a whole to a large degree also held true for Hunterdon. It is clear that at least until 1750 the best schools were those that had a connection with a religious group. The Lutheran and Reformed groups, already mentioned, operated parochial schools using the German or the Dutch language. The best church schools using English were those of the Presbyterians, usually taught by ministers. Nearly as good were those of the Episcopalians. Just before the Revolution, an Episcopal missionary praised the "long and faithful services" of a teacher at Amwell and Kingwood, who was partly paid from England. Baptist and other congregations often maintained a connection with the local school, generally through a minister.

But it was soon apparent that parochial schools did not reach far enough. The district or "common" school, managed by trustees, gradually evolved, and was soon recognized by the Province. Teachers were supposedly licensed by the Royal Governor, but probably few were. The first teachers, nearly always men, were largely a motley crew, "footloose and fancy free," so to speak. Many of them were fairly well educated, others with only a little more knowledge than their pupils. For some reason not clear, a great many were Irish who had wandered down from the New England colonies. Here today and gone tomorrow, they were willing for a small fee to attempt to keep a school for the winter. Some were redemptioners. Too poor to pay their own passage to the New World, they were forced to sell their time for a few years to discharge their passage costs. Some of the larger settlements were able to pool their scanty resources in order to "buy" a teacher to teach their children. No particular qualifications were necessary to become a school-master except a little smattering of knowledge, the ability to make ink and to whittle out quill pens, and the physical courage and stamina to "keep order". This was the era in which "licking and learning" was supposed to go together.

It must have been a problem to provide a suitable place for the schoolmaster to keep school. Early homes were small and always crowded, especially in the outlying areas. However, some small log schoolhouses were put up by community effort, usually by having a "frolic". Poorly heated, poorly ventilated and with scanty light, they were made to do. Books and materials of instruction as we know them were almost non-existent. Plimpton believes that the New England hornbook may have been used to some extent. This was a printed page fastened to a wooden backing and covered with horn to

protect the printing. Such books as were available were handed down from the oldest to the youngest in the family until they were completely worn out. The New Testament appears to have been used a great deal as a reader. Much of the teaching was by rote, using the question and answer plan. The master sometimes had his own manuscript "cyphering book" from which he dictated problems. Writing had to be done with charcoal on some fairly clean flat surface. Old deeds and other papers which have come down to us would lead us to the conclusion that spelling was not one of the strong points, though Dilworth's spelling book was in use. Up until the time of the Revolution, no geography was taught. Morse's Geography was not to appear until 1791. The hours of school were long, usually beginning around eight in the morning. At noon an hour's recess was given, then the master summoned his pupils again by rapping on the window frame and calling "books...books". School then continued until late in the afternoon, sometimes as long as daylight lasted.

By the beginning of the second half of the eighteenth century we get a clearer picture of the progress of education in early Hunterdon. Frequent references are now found concerning the building of schools. Churches in the County were becoming more firmly established. The coming of a church into an area usually brought some effort to provide instruction for the young. This was often under the prodding of the clergy. It goes without saying that no church could prosper unless the communicants were able to read the Scriptures, be it ever so haltingly. The Friends had established the Kingwood Meeting around 1730. They are said to have bought land for school purposes in 1746. In their case, it does not seem likely that they were able to start a school until some time later, if at all.

At left: The Friends' Meeting House in Quakertown was erected in 1862 with stones from a 1754 structure that replaced a 1747 building. Photo taken in 2005 is from the Franklin Archives At right: St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Alexandria Township, founded 1723. Photo from njchurchscape.com

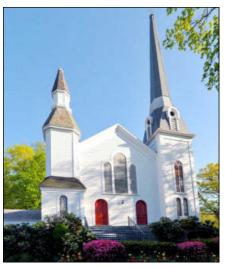


But an Anglican or Episcopalian Church was already in the area, having made plans for what was to be known as St. Thomas's Church as early as 1723. Dr. Henry Race tells of a lease taken for ground on which to build a school at Everitts Corner, about two miles southwest of Pittstown, in 1756. From an implication in the lease, it is clear that a school was already in existence. From the list of names signing the lease this school would appear to have been a sort of joint project of the Quakers, Episcopalians and Presbyterians in the immediate locality. In other words, a district school had been formed. An account book kept by Dr. James Willson in 1752 made reference to William Rennels as the schoolmaster. Tradition also tells of a school built by the Anglicans at Ringoes as early as 1720. Be that as it may, it soon must have languished because the Church was later removed to what is now Lambertville to become the beginning of St. Andrews parish.

A partial recital will show how rapidly church formation followed settlement. From 1745 to 1748 the Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg visited the early Lutheran Congregations near Whitehouse and Fairmount with the result that Zion Lutheran Church was established in present Oldwick in 1749, a merger of the Rockaway (Potterstown), Leslysland (Whitehouse) and Fox Hill groups. Spruce Run Lutheran followed in 1774. The Presbyterians had established themselves at Amwell (now Reaville Church) in 1738.



Zion Lutheran Church, Oldwick Photo from lutheronsonline.com



Spruce Run Lutheran Church, Glen Gardner. Photo from N.J.com



Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown. Photo from flickr.com

Bethlehem Presbyterian Church was founded in the 1730s at what is now Grandin. The Log Church at what is now Mount Pleasant, later



Alexandria First Presbyterian Church, Milford. Photo from alexpres.org



Kingwood Presbyterian Church, now Unitarian-Universalist, Oak Summit. Photo from the Kingwood Municipal webpage



St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, Lambertville . Photo from flickr.com

to be known as the Alexandria Presbyterian Church, was organized in 1752. Kingwood Presbyterian near Baptistown was built in 1775. The Baptists also claim to have established a church in Kingwood Township as early as 1741. The German Baptists or Dunkards were in Amwell as early as 1730 or even before.

The German settlers had established a church at what is now Larison's Corner as early as 1747. The Dutch had long been in the Readington area, having organized their church near that place in 1719. Methodism was not to gain a foothold until Revolutionary times. Bishop Asbury, himself paid several visits to the area between 1782 and 1811. Kingwood Church proudly boasts of his having preached from Pulpit Rock.

The Roman Catholics established their first church in Hunterdon when St. John's was dedicated in Lambertville in 1842. Many of the above congregations had church schools for a longer or shorter time. The church school movement of the Roman Catholics encouraged the founding of St. John's Parochial School in Lambertville in 1865 with 200 pupils. This school closed in 1870 to be reopened in 1883 on its present site. The convent where the Sisters staffing the school live was formerly the home of John Marshall. John Marshall later became famous as the discoverer of gold in California.

The first Jewish Community Center in the county was organized in Flemington in 1923 with Samuel Potter as President. The group had

its first building in 1933.

In the national period, there was an increased interest in providing more and better schools. Most of the little log buildings were replaced by small frame or stone buildings. Panes of glass appeared in the windows to replace the oiled paper. Desks were still usually a shelf along the outside wall, and the benches were backless. Pupils still lined up in a row to recite, hence the term "toeing the mark". Books were becoming a little more common, though pencils and paper were still less common than slates. The type of teachers seemed to improve also, as shown by the names that have come down to us. Gone were most of the itinerant pedagogues. While men still predominated, many women were becoming teachers, especially for the "spring term," when the larger boys would be working in the fields. It is noticeable that the names of some of the teachers appear in different school districts through the years, indicating that many were making teaching their life's work. Some of the younger men, however, taught a term or two to get together some money toward paying their way through college. Many ministers still taught on the side to eke out their incomes.

Just how well the average child was educated at that time is difficult to say. This is especially true among the children from the poorer homes. Those born into more fortunate circumstances could later attend one of the classical schools to round out their education. There is reason to believe that many grew up unable to read or write, due to circumstances or indifference. In general, less attention was paid to the education of girls than to boys.

Yet, the account books of tradesmen and mechanics which have come down to us are evidence that somehow people had learned to keep simple accounts and to do it fairly well. Little scraps of paper given as receipts for monies paid show that most farmers were able to read and write a little. During the change over from the English system of pounds, shillings and pence to our dollar system, it was often necessary to use a formula to translate to an equivalent value. That also was handled in a satisfactory manner.

In the early nineteenth century, each school seems to have been an entity unto itself. State control or regulation was non-existent. When it became necessary to put up a new building, the men of the neighborhood got together and did what was required. Land for a school site wasn't always bought but often leased for a long term, usually ninety-nine years. This practice was to be the cause of much vexatious legal trouble in later years when the time came to turn the property back to the heirs of the original lessor.

The three men in each district known as trustees were to remain in charge for a long time to come. New school buildings were usually located where they would conveniently serve the most pupils. No particular attention was paid to township boundary lines. In later years, this left some schools standing on the very edges of townships, so that part of the pupils were non-residents. This frequently happened where a public highway served as the boundary line between two townships. The schools that were along the "Old Trenton Road" were examples of this haphazard situation.

The century was not very old before a definite pattern in school control began to take shape. In 1817 the Legislature set up the first school fund and a year later created a board of trustees to manage the same. In 1820 townships were authorized to raise money for school purposes. In 1824 it was enacted that one-tenth of all moneys paid into the State in taxes was to be set aside and added to the school fund. In 1829 the Legislature appropriated \$20,000.00 annually for school aid.

In that year, as the result of this act, the first comprehensive school law in New Jersey, Hunterdon County received for its share \$2,267.92, proportioned among the various townships in proportion to the County Tax each paid:

Amwell	595.87	Readington	200.31
Trenton	176.89	Lebanon	244.15
Lawrence	112.73	Bethlehem	126.26
Hopewell	269.93	Tewksbury	114.41
Kingwood	211.89	Alexandria	215.49

Those pitifully small sums were used to pay the subscriptions of pupils whose parents could not afford to pay. Unfortunately, there was a stigma attached to being a "pauper" student.

In 1845, a State Superintendent of Schools was provided for as were township superintendents in 1846. In 1851, the school fund was increased to \$40,000.00 for distribution among the counties. In 1854, Teachers' Institutes were established, the first of which was held in Flemington for five days starting August 1, 1854. It was not until 1871 that the schools were made entirely free by State law. From that date until this, most of the costs of education have been raised by local taxation.

At first, the people living near a school, and who could afford it, had shared the costs of the school building. But as buildings became larger and more expensive, local taxation became the source of revenue from which buildings were constructed. The salaries of teachers in many areas were raised by subscription right up to 1871. A teacher

must see how many parents wished to send their children to the proposed school, and collect the fee of \$1.50 to \$2.00 per quarter for each pupil. The lucky teacher might well make as much as a laborer.

John Laing of Quakertown in December, 1850, made an agreement with nineteen residents of District No. 2 in Franklin Township to keep a school for one quarter of seventytwo days at \$2.00 per pupil. He agreed to teach the common branches such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling. The patrons were to furnish what they termed the necessary articles for a school, plus suitable quarters and fuel. All told he would have received about \$48.00 for the term and was under the necessity of collecting the money himself.

The building in which Laing proposed to start his school was about a mile and a half southwest of Ouakertown, along the road from Allen's Corner to Mason's corner. It stood in the woods on land leased from the Willson family. Built in 1837, it continued to be used until 1871, when a new and larger building was put up nearby on land bought from Joseph Myers. The old building was then moved to a new location [what is now 105 Locust Grove Road] near the farmhouse of James Willson, where it still stands in a fair state of preservation. Long used as a workshop and tool shed, it now belongs to Mrs. William B. Ewing. [The building was moved from Locust Grove Road in 1977 to the grounds of Franklin's 1936 consolidated school



Franklin's 1837 schoolhouse now sits beside the 1936 K-8 building in Quakertown and is used for history classes. From The Franklin Archives



The 1828 Cold Brook School in Readington was restored from stone ruins and opened in 1997 for the Township/Museum living history program. Photo from Readington Township website



The hexagonally-shaped 1851 Harmony school. Photo from The Hunterdon County Historical Society

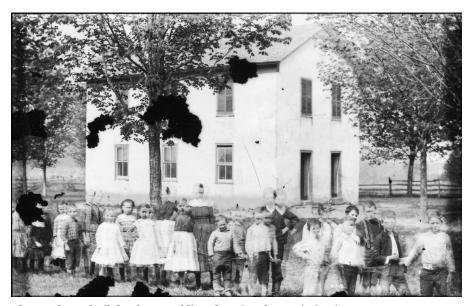
at 226 Quakertown Road and restored. A new foundation was put under it in 2009. Old-style desks and benches were made and installed in 2013.] It could well be the oldest building still standing in Hunterdon County that was once used as a schoolhouse. [Cold Brook School in Readington Township, erected in 1828, would seem to hold that honor.]

Early in the last century some very unusual looking schoolhouses made their appearance in Hunterdon County. These were the so-called "eight square" schools. They were really not eight-sided but six-sided or hexagonal in shape. Built of stone with a chimney sticking up from the apex of the roof, they much resembled an old-fashioned inkbottle. Sometimes they were called inkstand schools. There were at least four of these peculiar shaped schools in the County: Van Dolah's (1822) at Sandy Ridge; Harmony (1851) along the Trenton Road below Croton; Slack's Corner, between Croton and Baptistown; and Mount Lebanon (1833) in Lebanon Township. Van Dolah's and Harmony continued to be used until after the beginning of the present century and are still recalled with fondness by some of the older residents.

In the meantime, a slow but steady improvement was coming about in the materials of instruction. Gone were the guill pens from the master's desk. The new steel pens were coming into use. Lead pencils had made their appearance. Supplies and books had to be furnished by the pupils themselves. The backless benches around the outside of the room were being replaced by double desks and seats. Clumsy at first, they were, however, a big improvement. Hiram Deats at Pittstown manufactured some of these early school desks for a time. The better stores now began to carry textbooks in stock at prices parents could afford to pay. All the pupils in the third reader, for example, would now be able to read from the same kind of textbook. McGuffey's and particular Sander's readers were widely used in Hunterdon County schools. Perkin's and Stoddard's Arithmetics were in common use. Grammar was taught from Pineo's or Smith's Grammar. Geography could also be studied if one secured a copy of Colton's or Fitche's book.

Teachers still continued to be poorly paid. Those from outside their local district were forced to board around, a week at a time, in the various families, a practice which many teachers would gladly have avoided if possible. After 1846 teachers were required to secure a license before attempting to teach. These licenses were to be obtained from a local board of examiners appointed by the township superintendent.

The annual report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction



The Academy, built by the Franklin Educational Association in 1850, was not successful and was demolished in 1913. Glass slide photo from Mark & Irene Mortesen

for 1859 contains some interesting information. It was supposed to be made up from the reports of the township superintendents of schools from all over the State. Apparently, though, not all superintendents took the trouble to file a report. Township superintendents were elected by the people and were generally from the professional classes. Once in a while a farmer would be given the office, as was once the case in Kingwood Township. Hunterdon's showing among the reports was not very good. Only four of her township superintendents took the trouble to make a report. Attendance appears to have been rather poor, buildings were in bad repair, teachers were poorly paid and hard to secure and, above all, money was scarce. Evidently the State was not always prompt in disbursing state aid. Kingwood Township for the year previous had received only \$500.00 from the State. Some teachers were receiving as high as \$600.00 per year, but in many cases women teachers were required to teach a whole year for only \$190.00. The State Superintendent made the observation that in his opinion it would be a good thing to abandon the system of local district control and to place the schools directly under one system of administration on a township-wide basis. This was a change which was to be a quarter-century in coming.

While this painfully slow progress was being made in the field of elementary education, there seemed to be an increasing interest in what we know as education on the secondary level. This was the era in which private schools and academies sprung up and flourished, though sometimes but briefly. It would be hard to list all of them,

but some of the best remembered were: the Academy of Arts and Sciences at Ringoes under Dr. C.W. Larison and the Young Ladies Seminary at Ringoes under the leadership of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Katherine B. Larison. Stockton had an academy at one time. There were also private schools in Lambertville. New Germantown (now Oldwick) boasted two or three, the best known of which was Barnet Hall. Clarksville had its Mondalia Academy. At Quakertown, a stock company put up a two-story stone building in 1850 designed to be an Academy. The company unfortunately ran into financial trouble and the Odd Fellows Lodge took over the upper story while the public school moved into the downstairs room. Flemington had an academy dating back to 1811. It appears to have lapsed in the 1840s but in 1855 a new academy was started in the old Lyceum building at the foot of Court Street. William Heath was the first principal, followed by John S. Higgins and later Dr. C.W. Larison. This school was carried on quite successfully until Reading Academy was built on Bonnell Street, when it appears to have been absorbed by the new school, which, after several years, was to evolve into Flemington High School.

As the population of Hunterdon increased, there seems to have been a general increase in cultural interest. Schools fast became the centers of community life. Singing schools used many buildings during the evening hours, and several little towns had debating societies. One of the best known of these was organized at Quakertown in the 1860s. Among its most active members were two bright young fellows from the "Swamp" – Egbert Bush and William Barrick. Another was young "Newt" Best, later to become Dr. George N. Best, famous as a botanist and for many years a practicing physician at Rosemont. Like many another such society, the Quakertown Debating Society was undaunted by the most difficult or abstruse of topics. For a short time, a group published a small newspaper called *The Quaker*town Slasher. The Hon. George O. Vanderbilt, writing in 1913 of his days as a teacher at Quakertown, observes that it was indeed a "slasher", slashing into anyone and everyone. Perhaps it is understandable that the paper was short-lived.

Sunday schools, which began to flourish in Hunterdon about the middle of the century, often made use of an available schoolroom as a place to meet. Box socials, political meetings, and an occasional traveling show would be held in an available schoolroom during the evening hours. It is understandable that so many school communities were loath to part with their little one-room schools when the consolidated schools began to take over. In their passing, Hunterdon, along with the rest of the country, appears to have lost something that had become part of the American tradition.

In 1867, the office of County Superintendent of Schools was created. The first Superintendent in Hunterdon was John C. Rafferty, followed by the Rev. C.S. Conkling, Rulif Swackhammer, Oliver H. Hoffman, Edward M. Heath and Jason S. Hoffman, to mention some of the earlier ones. These were all well-educated, capable men who did much to raise the standard of education in Hunterdon County. Perhaps the best recalled because of his long tenure is Jason S. Hoffman, who held the office for over thirty-five years. Harry W. Moore who was superintendent from 1928 to 1948 will long be remembered for his untiring efforts to bring about the consolidation of the district schools, and creation of regional high school districts. When the office of County Superintendent was created, the old township boards of examiners were abolished, and a single County board, appointed by the County Superintendent, was set up. Certificates obtainable by successful taking an examination were first, second and third grade State certificates.

Roughly, the buildings of schools in Hunterdon County may be divided into five general periods. The first period of makeshift buildings lasted until about the close of the Revolution. The second period of more substantial buildings lasted until about 1825. The third period, during which academies and private schools came into being, continued through the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. The period of the one-room district school ended during the 1940s. The fifth, and present, period is that of the consolidated school. It was not unusual, early in the present [20th] century, for teachers to receive less than \$50.00 per month, out of which they must pay their board and clothe themselves. Despite the low salaries, there was a group of male teachers in Hunterdon County who remained faithful to the teaching profession until the time of their retirement. They were indeed remarkable and truly dedicated men. Often with a rather limited preparation for teaching, so great was their zeal and enthusiasm for education that they were able to inspire their more promising pupils to press onward toward goals they themselves had been unable to attain. Some of these men were perhaps none too easy to get along with and they were sometimes overexacting in their demands. These minor shortcomings have long since been forgotten in the light of what they so unselfishly were willing to give to those who came under their tutelage.

This was the period in which secondary education became thoroughly established in Hunterdon County. By 1900 there were good four-year high schools in Flemington, Lambertville, Clinton, High Bridge, Frenchtown, and Hampton. Parents and pupils alike were coming to see that an eighth grade education was not enough to meet the challenge of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Transportation of pupils remote

from school at public expense was now permissible, and in time became customary. Textbooks and supplies became free to pupils. Local townships now were required to pay the tuition cost of pupils attending high school. A completely new climate seemed to surround education.

This situation was further improved when, in 1912, the State Legisla-



North Hunterdon Regional High School above and Hunterdon Central Regional High School below. Photos from the schools





South Hunterdon Regional High School. Photo from the school



Delaware Valley Regional High School. Photo from the school

ture gave the educational system a complete overhauling. The office of the State Superintendent was supplanted by that of a Commissioner of Education, aided by a corps of Assistant Commissioners. Dr. Calvin N. Kendall was brought to New Jersey to head up the new system. The old county boards of examiners were abolished, and a statewide system of elementary and secondary certification was introduced. State summer schools were inaugurated for the training of would-be teachers. A native son of Hunterdon, Charles A. Philhower, had a prominent role in bring about many of the changes.

At the same time the pressure for the consolidation of schools was stepped up, with the result that before the century was half over, local schools had become something of the past. On the secondary level, high school enrollment increased so rapidly that the facilities of the county high schools became taxed far beyond their limits. The only solution appeared to be the creation of regional high schools. Four of these have been set up in Hunterdon. These take care of pupils on the secondary level in all the districts except High Bridge and Bloomsbury, which preferred to retain their own high school arrangements. The first regional school district in Hunterdon was formed in 1947 when North Hunterdon Regional High School Dis-

trict was created by the Townships of Bethlehem, Clinton, Franklin, Lebanon, Tewksbury and Union, the Town of Clinton and the Boroughs of Califon, Hampton, Glen Gardner and Lebanon. This was the largest number of districts in New Jersey ever to regionalize. In 1954 Delaware, East Amwell, Raritan and Readington Townships and the Boroughs of Flemington formed the Hunterdon Central Regional High School District. In 1956, Alexandria, Holland and Kingwood Townships and Milford and Frenchtown Boroughs formed the Delaware Valley Regional High School District. In the same year, South Hunterdon Regional High School District was formed by West Amwell Township, Lambertville City and Stockton Borough joining together. Flemington Borough and Raritan Township on July 1, 1961, formed a regional school district to operate an elementary school, after having been previously joined in the consolidated form in July 1948.

From the humble beginning in a log cabin school here and there throughout the County, the local religious leaders for teachers and pupils attending school a few months of their lives, public education of its youth has come to be one of Hunterdon's proudest accomplishments. At the present time there are approximately 14,000 students enrolled in 35 schools being taught by 700 teachers.

## Education, 1989

#### update by Stephanie Stevens

In the last 25 years, elementary and secondary schools, like the rest of the County, underwent enormous changes. In 1964, Hunterdon Central High School had 1,418 students in one school building. Likewise, North Hunterdon High School had one school with 1,194 students. High Bridge with 134 students still supported a high school and did not become part of the North Hunterdon District until October 10, 1972. South Hunterdon High School opened in 1959 for grades 7-12. Most of the grammar schools in the County contained kindergarten through eighth grades in one building. Elementary school children did not move from class to class for different subjects but remained in one classroom where their teacher taught all disciplines. On the lower level, art and music were not separate special subjects, and grammar school bands were unheard of. P.T.A.'s were very active throughout the County and raised funds so that pupils could have cultural assembly programs and books for libraries.

There were few school libraries in those days. In-class libraries were more the thing. Hunterdon County Library was in Flemington on the corner of Spring Street. Flemington Fur occupies the building today.



North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional High School. Photo from the school

Clinton Town, Flemington Borough and Lambertville had private library associations and there were several small local "lending" libraries started by civilians willing to share their books. Bi-weekly visits by the bookmobile served the reading public of Hunterdon for branch libraries did not exist. Bookmobiles had regular stops all over the County; in villages, near general stores, any place that could provide parking for several cars. There were two doors in the bookmobile, both on one side. One entered the rear door, selected books from shelves on both sides, then exited at the front door where the driver had a table top check-out desk. Bookmobiles were excellent in rural areas; when people couldn't get to the library, the library went to them.

Throughout the 6os Hunterdon was still very rural. School children were more versed in farm activities than anything else and agriculture courses on the high school level drew large numbers of students. It was not unusual to see a lamb or super large pumpkin appear at "Show and Tell" on the elementary level. The first day of deer hunting season traditionally was an "in-service" day for teachers, i.e., the teachers went to school for a workshop while the older students were out in the fields hunting. Such was life in rural districts!

Due to the discovery of Hunterdon by suburban families, the 70s brought vast changes in living styles to this County. Rural lifestyles prevailed but with land being developed in the border townships of Readington, Raritan and Clinton, the death knell tolled for agrarian living. Schools were sensitive to changing lifestyles and tried to meet the needs of the emerging population. Several schools housed grades K-4. Middle schools serving grades 5-8 became the norm. Nursery schools blossomed; auxiliary buildings of all kinds were put into use

to house the burgeoning kindergarten population. "Open" classroom type of instruction was introduced and eventually dropped in favor of the traditional class. "Modern math" and new reading methods were taught. The late seventies saw the grammar school curricula regularly include music and art instruction. New school construction and additions routinely included libraries. Branch libraries of the Hunterdon County library system opened, making reference materials more available to students. On the high school level, due to the sale of land, farm-oriented courses drew fewer and fewer students. Because of the crush, Voorhees High School, part of the North Hunterdon District, opened its doors in 1975.

The 70s also brought that scourge of the century: drugs.

With the sociological changes of the 70s and 80s, County schools once again changed gears to meet the needs of the current crop of youngsters. Course offerings contained such things as "Family Living and Child Care," alcohol and drug related information, sex education, affirmative action, women's rights, and AIDS instruction. Today computers take up one or two rooms in schools throughout the County. Since the early 70s, the special child has been educated at his level, while the 80s brought educational opportunities for the gifted and talented student. The four Hunterdon high school districts with their five high schools share a vast vocational education organization. North, Central and Voorhees offer specialized courses and vocational students are bused between schools.

Students entering school today will be subject to a statewide and district testing program. Between kindergarten and twelfth grades, school children will be tested in several areas of academic proficiency. These tests are not so much to determine general intelligence as to assess student performance and district strengths and weaknesses. The next step is for the school district to improve its curricula in areas of most need.

Most 1980s mothers are employed. Hunterdon schools, therefore, have taken on the added burden of before and after-school care for the generation known as "latchkey kids." The working mother is a phenomenon of the century — a heretofore unheard-of species. All of this gives rise to the question of school responsibilities versus familial and societal responsibilities for children.

Hunterdon's school budget in 1989 totaled \$124,503,298. The average annual cost of educating an elementary school child is about \$4,231, a high school student, \$6,161; a far cry from the one-room schoolhouse of yesteryear where parents paid \$1.50 to \$2.00 per student per quarter. While the student of today is more sophisticated than his counterpart of the 60s, some things never change. In the

60s, Hunterdon County, on the high school level, was considered the hotbed of fine wrestling. It still is! Our children attend 43 schools throughout the County, and are well-educated. They enjoy small classes taught by devoted teachers. Offerings on the high school level can compare with any school in the United States. Academically, today's youngsters are most competitive. Every year, we have several National Merit Scholarship finalists.

Hunterdon County can be proud of her finest product, the educational system.

# Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2014 update by Stephanie B. Stevens

Due to the dramatic explosion of technology in the last twenty-five years today's child is surrounded by cell phones, iPods, iPads, laptops, hand-held gaming devices, TV, computers, and more. Media saturation overwhelms the student. Teachers are working with children who, for their whole lives, have been immersed in the digital world. Twitter and FaceBook are as familiar to pupils today as "Dick and Jane" were to yesterday's scholars. Even toddlers and preschoolers learn colors, numbers and letters using the various digital devices available. The child of the 21st century has become a digital thinker. An increasingly complex, globalized, diverse society demands the skills necessary to compete in that world.

Because of technology, educators recognize the many different methods of learning. While this has always been so, more emphasis has been placed on critical thinking and problem solving techniques. Information is abundant; however, the child must develop skills for analyzing and applying learned materials to real-world problems – project-based learning is the key. Schools are more and more adapting to the learning styles of 21<sup>st</sup> century children. The strong rigidity of yesterday's teacher-centered classroom is giving way to research-driven project learning in a more fluid classroom. Due to technology, students have the ability to work on projects with their classmates as well as students around the world.

The downside of all of this technology is the added burden of teaching the student how to responsibly handle the Internet. Cyber bullying with its cruel ability to immediately spread invective about others, whether true or supposed, has become an important component in character education. Safety on the Internet necessitates parental and school diligence in how the student gives out personal informa-



Polytech provides 11 core career and technical training programs for high school students and for adults in Continuing Education. Photo from the school

tion. While the Internet is truly "the information highway," it also resents a whole new set of social problems unknown to past generations. Upon entry into school, pupils must be immersed in standards for Internet use and abuse. Only by meeting the various problems presented by advanced technology head-on and continuously will society develop responsible behavior in our students.

Will school books be replaced by iPads or Nooks or Kindles? Considering the cost of publishing books and supplying every student, it's entirely possible to see future scholars downloading books for every subject and carrying only a small device from classroom to classroom. The omnipresent backpack would also, by necessity, shrink in size or disappear completely.

Considering the vast amount of funds expended to create Hunterdon's 50 schools, it is doubtful there will be dramatic changes in building styles in the foreseeable future. If technology demands larger or smaller rooms, the school interior can always be modified to meet the needs of the day.

While students of yesterday had access to musical/arts education it was somewhat limited to the high school years. Education in the arts has been universally recognized as integral to educating the whole child; therefore, the arts are now part of the curriculum in every grade.

No longer do pupils travel all over the county to attend vocational courses. Polytech, a stand-alone school specializing in career and technical education, was organized in 1996 in Flemington to serve all high school students across the county. The school has its own Superintendent and Board for governance and two campuses, one on Bartles Corner Road and one on the Central High School grounds. Its courses range from auto mechanics to nursing, 3D computer animation to culinary arts. Classes meet for half of the school day for the entire year. Along with their professional training, students must

complete academic requirements through their home high schools. Some programs now bestow college academic credits. Continuing education classes also provide license, certificate and non-credit programs to adult students who want to expand their learning and pursue new interests. The career academy is rated by parents and others as a five-star school.

When Hunterdon was agrarian, one of the most respected and well attended courses was FFA – Future Farmers of America. Today, with the County no longer rural, demand for agricultural education is minimal and it is taught at only one high school in Hunterdon, South Hunterdon Regional High School. Farms have given way to subdivisions of large homes. Hunterdon is one of the most affluent counties in America, both monetarily and educationally. Gone from high school parking lots are trucks with "farmer" license plates. In their places are the latest model cars.

Educational costs in Hunterdon have almost tripled in the last 25 years; educating one student here in 2013 cost \$18,191. There are 50 public schools countywide with a total student population in 2013 of 21,416 and school budgets nearing \$398,000,000. Many graduates countywide seek education beyond high school.

There is a statewide movement to rein in educational costs, which are born solely by property taxes. It has been suggested that a countywide educational system would put every child "on the same page" and save considerable taxpayer money. In a significant move toward that end, and a first for Hunterdon, south county residents voted three to one in 2013 to eliminate duplicate services by merging South Hunterdon Regional High School, Lambertville, Stockton, and West Amwell School districts.

Perhaps this is the forerunner of what lies ahead for education in New Jersey where property taxes are the highest in the nation and climbing. School taxes take the largest part of a tax dollar in Hunterdon. In an effort to stem the tide of school spending across New Jersey. State government has urged consolidation of school districts as is done in many other states. Well, it happened, the fruits of the merger are some years away due to educational rules, but they are coming, and the taxpayers and parents in the new South County School District are the winners.

Only time will tell how the educational system will proceed, but we do know that for three hundred years parents of Hunterdon children have sought to provide the best educational experiences available.

# *Healthcare, 2014* by Robert P. Wise, FACHE, MPH



Throughout the history of Hunterdon County, the citizenry of the County have played significant roles in the growth and development of the County's governmental constructs, its economy, and its educational infrastructure. Likewise, the citizenry of the County have played a critical role—indeed, *the* critical role—in the evolution of healthcare within its borders.

New Jersey's healthcare history in the early and middle decades of the 1700s remained rooted in the same traditions that guided much of the world's healthcare decisions.

New Jersey was fortunate enough to have medical professionals who saw a need and worked toward addressing it. In 1772, our State was among the first to create a basic examination and licensure system for physicians—and to dictate that, unless you possessed the necessary qualifications, you were not considered a professional physician.

Later that same decade—in fact, a few short weeks after the signing of the Declaration of Independence—the New Jersey Medical Society was chartered. Founded on July 23, 1776, it was the first organization of medical professionals in the original colonies. Though it would eventually be renamed the Medical Society of New Jersey, this groundbreaking organization is the oldest medical society in the United States.

In 1816, in an effort to make the licensure process more effective, the New Jersey Medical Society was given the ability to grant professional physicians' licenses. That same year, a young woman named Sarah Clark Case received a medical license—and in being granted that license, she immediately earned her place in Hunterdon County's history as the County's first licensed female physician.

Healthcare in Hunterdon County was an important part of the community, but its growth lagged behind that of the County's farming and commercial communities. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century,

those in need traveled to whatever healthcare facilities were nearest. To be sure, there were local general practitioners within the County to whom they could go for general healthcare needs; for many, only a slight bit of travel was involved.

The same did not hold true, however, if your particular health situation required the utilization of a specialist. To engage the services of a cardiologist, a gastroenterologist, or even a neurologist, Hunterdon County residents, prior to 1953, found themselves commuting to neighboring counties and, in some instances, to healthcare facilities across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania.

Some in the County felt this was unacceptable and took action. One of



Sarah Clark Case, MD, licensed in 1816 by the NJ Medical Society, making her the first licensed female physician in Hunterdon and one of the earliest in the state.

Photo from the Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission

the first to do so was Edgar T. Phillips, a businessman and resident of Lambertville who, when he passed away in 1918, specified in his will that his estate should be used to build and endow a hospital. The hospital, Phillips specified, should be used to provide proper healthcare to the indigent, and would have to be built either within the town of Lambertville or within a mile of the town's borders.

Though the funds in his estate were insufficient to accomplish Phillips' goals, they would remain in trust for decades. The money would eventually play a role in the story of Hunterdon Medical Center a number of years after the Center began treating patients. But before that would happen, fellow businessman John E. Barber would, in 1939, also bequeath his estate for purposes similar to those put forth by Phillips. And, like Phillips', those funds would not help in the creation of the Medical Center, but would instead play a role in its evolution and expansion.

Of all of New Jersey's twenty-one modern-day counties, Hunterdon was the only county, as late as the mid-twentieth-century, to not have a hospital facility located within its borders. Hunterdon Medical Center's arrival in 1953 would change all of that, dramatically and for the better.

Many consider the "founding fathers" of Hunterdon Medical Center to actually be a trio of women, all from different backgrounds, but all sharing a common commitment to bringing quality healthcare to their fellow County residents. They were Rose Angell, Louise Leicester and Ann Stevenson.

Rose Zander Angell was a nurse and social worker with roots in the Midwest, who had come to Hunterdon County in 1924. In 1932, Mrs. Angell was asked to lead the recently created Hunterdon County Welfare Department, a position she would hold until her retirement in 1951. Throughout much of that time, she led a wide spectrum of Hunterdon County's healthcare provision efforts, dealing with the afflictions and issues of the aged, the handicapped, the



Rose Angell Photo from the Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission

chronically ill, and young wards. Her innovative approaches to solving the healthcare issues besetting the County included, among other initiatives, paying some healthcare recipients to supervise or even board with other patients who could not completely provide care for themselves, and negotiating flat rates with local physicians to provide care.

Louise Leicester was an experienced writer and public relations expert, whose work had included everything from contributing as a writer for the radio serial *The Green Hornet* to managing the public relations for the 1939 World's Fair in New York City. Although she lacked any background in healthcare, she would play a key role in locating and utilizing healthcare experts, a skill that would prove crucial in the creation of the Hunterdon Medical Center.

Ann Stevenson was an educator, the wife of a respected area farmer, and the daughter of an old Hunterdon family. She and her husband were known and respected throughout the Hunterdon agricultural community.

The quest to provide Hunterdon County with its own hospital began to come alive in 1941. That year, Rose Angell reached out to the New Jersey Department of Institutions and Agencies to obtain information regarding how to best demonstrate the County's need for a hospital. Despite making a compelling case, however, discussions regarding the need for a hospital within Hunterdon County were not, at that time, acted upon by the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Undeterred, Rose Angell wrote to the Director of the Commonwealth Fund.

The Commonwealth Fund's original charge was to "do something for the welfare of mankind," a mission it continues to adhere to even today. It had chosen to meet this challenge by identifying and contributing support to proposals that moved communities across the United States towards a top-quality health care system. Rose Angell's letter to the Fund detailed the "Hospital Plan" she had built through her work with the Hunterdon County Welfare Workers Council. The "Hospital Plan" was simple in execution, but extraordinary in its vision. Hospitals in adjacent counties, under agreements hammered out by Mrs. Angell, had agreed to treat Hunterdon County welfare patients for a specific day rate for each patient. If there were any costs over and above the normal anticipated care for that patient, the hospital providing those costs was responsible for paying them. Childbirths, tonsillectomies, and similar 'routine' procedures all had their own fixed rates, negotiated by Rose Angell and the hospital. Both the hospital and Mrs. Angell agreed that the Director of the Hunterdon County Welfare Board would verify that a patient was entitled to benefits and that the County would provide the source of payment.

This 1940s-era system might sound familiar. Mrs. Angell's efforts on behalf of Hunterdon County's patients had led the County's government to adhere to what are today considered the modern-day underpinnings of managed care—risk for some elements of healthcare gets carried by the hospital, and not the patient. Despite her best efforts, however, the Commonwealth Fund chose to decline her request.

In spite of the Fund's refusal, Rose Angell's belief that Hunterdon County needed its own hospital facility never wavered. She discussed the topic with physicians throughout the County, with fellow healthcare professionals, and with County residents. Slowly but surely, support among the medical community began to build. The Hunterdon Republican, Hunterdon County's weekly newspaper, carried an article in its November 29, 1945 issue entitled "Welfare Director Cites Dire Need For County Hospital." In that article, the President of the Hunterdon Medical Society, Dr. John Fritz, provided a quote that agreed with Mrs. Angell's assertion that the time was right for Hunterdon to have its own hospital. The article would prove to be one of the key moments in the history of healthcare in Hunterdon County. A week later, on December 6th, the leadership of the Hunterdon Republican wrote "Doctors from every part of Hunterdon, this week raised their voices in agreement...that 'the County's need of a hospital was growing daily more desperate."

With the *Hunterdon Republican* articles in support, Rose Angell contacted Louise Leicester. Mrs. Angell wanted to build upon the publicity that the *Hunterdon Republican* articles had engendered. Louise Leicester agreed to aid Rose Angell in her efforts, and suggested that one of the best methods of convincing the residents of the County—and its government—that a hospital was needed would be to obtain a survey conducted by a medical authority outside of Hunterdon.

The year 1946 would prove to be crucial for healthcare in Hunterdon County. In January of that year, the Hunterdon County Board of Agriculture's Executive Committee was asked by Farmers' Union representative Waldo McNutt to address the topic of a "County Hospital." The Executive Committee agreed with Mr. McNutt's suggestion and made a "County Hospital" one of the key discussions at its February meeting.

When the Board met again in March, it found Ann Stevenson, Louise Leicester, Rose Angell, and local civic leader Lloyd Wescott sitting together. Mrs. Angell rose and made a presentation to the Board, citing a number of groundbreaking and successful projects the Board had undertaken in the past, praising the Board and its members for their vision in choosing those projects, and outlining her data and supporting arguments for giving Hunterdon County its own hospital. She asked the Board to consider the idea, and—if they deemed it worthwhile—to approve further efforts in this direction. When Mrs. Angell concluded her remarks, discussion amongst the Board members began, and it continued until nearly midnight. In the end, Board President Clifford Snyder appointed Mr. Wescott the Chairman of a committee to look into the feasibility of Hunterdon County having its own hospital.

This special committee set about its task quickly and thoroughly. Within four months of its formation, it was back with a report that had been pulled together by Louise Leicester and Dr. Emil Frankel of the New Jersey Department of Institutions and Agencies. In those brief four months an incredible amount of work had taken place. Surveys had been undertaken of County demographic data, new and traditional methods of hospital planning and organization, rural and suburban health care systems, and nearby hospitals and other healthcare institutions. It had also consulted, analyzed, and distilled ideas obtained from reports from the American Medical Association, the Commonwealth Fund, and a number of the leading healthcare organizations of the day.

When the special committee presented its report, it also provided the Board's membership with a picture not only of Hunterdon County, but also of the nation. Nationally, healthcare had seen a tremendous expansion in the post-World War II era. Where that growth had predominantly not occurred, however, was in rural areas. Nationally-conducted surveys had found that there were still wide gaps between the nation's farming communities and its urban centers; among the areas in which those gaps were most striking were in the death rates of infants and their mothers.

The special committee's report also reminded the Board that theirs

was the only New Jersey county remaining without a hospital and, perhaps just as important, the hospitals in the counties adjacent to Hunterdon were already either at or approaching their maximum capacities. Part of the reason for this was that those adjacent counties were not servicing just their own residents. On average, these hospitals estimated that they were seeing approximately a tenth of Hunterdon's population over the course of any given year.

Faced with these and many other convincing arguments, the special committee's recommendation was that Hunterdon County needed to provide better healthcare facilities for its citizenry. It presented two options—either help neighboring counties with the expenses to be incurred in expanding or enhancing those facilities, or create a hospital in Hunterdon County. It should also be noted that the committee was extremely realistic in its appraisal of the situation, pointing out to the Board of Agriculture that no matter how good the idea of Hunterdon County having its own hospital sounded, it would fall far short of expectations if the project were not fiscally solid, and backed by the support of County residents. To that end, the special committee suggested that, should the Board decide to pursue the possibility of building a hospital for Hunterdon County, it would do well to follow three critical "next steps."

First, create a County committee that represented as much of the County community as possible, so that all viewpoints could be shared, considered, and factored into the ongoing deliberations. Second, obtain a qualified consultant to assess the situation and perform any necessary surveys and additional deliberations in order to arrive at an even more thoroughly researched final decision. The final step was a nod to Hunterdon County's practicality and agricultural sensibilities —make sure that all of the work done by the County committee and the special consultant was paid for by private funds. The Board was convinced—it was time for a hospital. They gave their consent to move the hospital project forward.

In the early months of 1947, a few months after the acceptance of the special committee's report, Dr. Edward Henry Lewinsky-Corwin was retained as the consultant for the hospital project. Dr. Corwin came to Hunterdon County's special committee with an already extensive career filled with critical healthcare accomplishments. Since 1911, he had served as the Executive Secretary of the Committee on Public Health Relations at the New York Academy of Medicine. His work there included the creation, organization and implementation of an association of outpatient clinics; the investigation of conditions at contagious disease hospitals; the creation of medical standards for dispensaries within his purview; the founding, along with S.S. Goldwater, of the first International Hospital Association; and the crea-

tion of an information bureau on hospitals within the region, a bureau he led for more than a decade following its opening.

Nearly a year would pass before Dr. Corwin presented his final report, the "Survey of Health and Hospital Needs in Hunterdon County." His conclusion was that Hunterdon County was in need of a hospital—but not just any hospital. Dr. Corwin's suggestion was that what Hunterdon County needed was a hospital combined with a health center, a single, unified entity that could coordinate and provide any and all health services to the County's residents, including expert clinical and public health services. He also suggested that mental health services be a part of the new hospital's offerings. At the helm of this new construct would be a medical director whose work would also encompass that of the traditional role of hospital administrator. Finally, the entire entity—the hospital, its offerings, and the medical director—should be affiliated with an established university; Dr. Corwin's suggestion was New York University's Medical College and Bellevue Medical Center.

It was a bold and innovative concept, for there was little discussion at that time about hospitals taking responsibility for the overall health of the communities they served. While there were discussions regarding the myriad details involved in such an undertaking, they were conducted in a predominantly cooperative atmosphere, the end result being that the Commonwealth Fund was sufficiently impressed to lend their support to the project. One of the deciding factors for the Fund's support came through the five principal reasons Dr. Corwin gave for the way in which he chose to organize the future Hunterdon Medical Center:

It provides for a direct linkage with a university medical school, thus assuring a high grade of medical service.

It does not in any way enter into competition with the medical profession. On the contrary, it strengthens their positions and makes available to them a consulting service and an opportunity to extend the field of their usefulness to the patient.

It serves as a center of attraction, not only to the patients who desire superior medical care near home without having to go to the large urban medical centers, but also to physicians to settle in Hunterdon County in the future. Thus it will achieve a high utilization rate of its facilities and, with a carefully worked out fiscal program, it

may become self-supporting in a very short time after it gets into full swing.

Through the close association with the Health Center, the hospital will become a potent force for raising the health standards throughout Hunterdon County.

Because of its association with the New York University-Bellevue Medical Center, it will be able to attract interns and residents as well as develop a high-profile nurse training school in which the young women of the community will be glad to enroll and obtain training near home. The hospital will become a forerunner of the type of organization that rural hospitals may want to follow in other parts of the country. (emphasis added)

It cannot be stressed enough that the decision to move ahead with bringing a hospital to fruition was a community's and not an individual's. The work accomplished within the span of just a brief two years or so was extraordinary in the annals of not only Hunterdon County, but the State of New Jersey itself.

The end result of all of these discussions, negotiations, debates and meetings was a modest meeting in March of 1948. It was an incorporation meeting, a touchstone moment in the history of healthcare in Hunterdon County. Following the meeting, incorporation papers were filed which read, in part:

The purposes for which this corporation is formed are charitable -- where medical and surgical diagnosis, treatment, care and nursing, and improvement of, and benefits to, their health, will be rendered to persons of any creed, race, nationality, or color; and also including as a part thereof, medical research, the training of physicians and auxiliary personnel, and also the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a school for the training, education, instruction and preparation of persons as nurses of sick, injured, infirm, aged, feebleminded or idiotic persons.

In that one brief paragraph lie the foundations for a healthcare institution unique in the roster of New Jersey's hospitals. The project's scope, the idea that this hospital would serve as both a center for community health care and medical treatment, the potential for this new institution to provide for both training and research efforts, and

the insistence upon conformity to certain recognized standards of the day—all of these were integral to what was envisioned by the community and its leaders for Hunterdon Medical Center.

Nine months later, the future Hunterdon Medical Center's initial Board of Trustees held a very special meeting. It was a countywide rally at a school in Quakertown, and speakers at the rally ranged from County health and governmental officials, to representatives of New York University, to New Jersey's then-Commissioner of Health, Dr. Daniel S. Bergsma. If there were any doubts as to public support for a new hospital and health center for the County, they dissipated quickly as approximately 800 residents from the four corners of Hunterdon began to file through the doors and take their seats. Their presence was a testament to not only the recognized need for a progressive healthcare facility to be built in Hunterdon County, but the years of effort and leadership, first by the County's Board of Agriculture, then by the special committee it appointed, and finally by the Hunterdon Medical Center's inaugural Board of Trustees.

These same Trustees promised the populace that if the hospital project had to be abandoned for whatever reason—any gifts that were bestowed and any funds that were raised would be returned to the original donors.

The official start of the campaign to raise funds for the hospital was May 4, 1949, but some consider that its true start occurred the evening prior, at a dinner that was held for the many volunteers who, the next day, would embark upon an initiative unlike any that had been undertaken in Hunterdon County before—or since. At that dinner, Lloyd Wescott, who had now earned the position of chairman of the hospital's fundraising campaign, informed all in attendance that tomorrow's endeavor already had a head start: nearly \$170,000 had already been placed in the campaign's coffers through pre-campaign contributions.

It was mentioned earlier that the story of healthcare in Hunterdon County was a story of its people, and at no time was that clearer than during the efforts to raise funds for the future Hunterdon Medical Center. The Campaign Committee didn't have to look too far for quality advertising professionals. George Bushfield and Samuel Fuson were residents of the County who readily volunteered their time, energy, and expertise to work on all aspects of publicity, public outreach, and special events. The goal would seem modest by today's standards: \$1,200,000 needed to be raised before the first shovel could break ground. That may not seem very daunting, but consider this: at the time the campaign for a hospital was launched, the entire population of Hunterdon County consisted of only about 10,000



Volunteers across the County rallied to raise funds to build a hospital.

Photo from the Hunterdon Medical Center

#### households.

Though the fundraising campaign began officially in May of 1949, plans had begun far in advance of the launch date. The Campaign Committee knew it had to cover every acre of Hunterdon County's 438 square miles, and that the little towns that dotted the landscape were the easy part of their outreach efforts. Most Hunterdon County residents lived outside these small municipalities. Across the County, doors would need to be knocked on, doorbells would need to be rung and, when those gentle efforts didn't turn up a homeowner, trips out to barns, garages, henhouses and fields would be the next step. And they often were.

A virtual army of over 1,000 volunteers was mobilized. Each of the County's twenty-six municipalities had a chairman, and that chairman had a group of volunteers who reached out to the families within their borders. Anyone who doubted the generosity of the families of Hunterdon County had those doubts laid to rest by the close of the second month of fundraising, when the fund for a new hospital reached \$754,696.41, a figure that not even the most optimistic members of the Campaign Committee had hoped to reach in so brief a period of time.

Many children handed over their piggy banks, intact, to help out the fundraising efforts. Some turned over portions of their weekly paychecks. In his book *Hunterdon Medical Center: The Story of One Approach to Rural Medical Care*, Hunterdon Medical Center's inaugural Director Dr. Ray E. Trussell paints an extraordinary portrait of community involvement:

...there were club plans for weekly deductions from pay checks, and the farmers entered into a club plan by contributing percentages of produce checks... Donations weren't always made in money; one week the Campaign Committee was in a real quandary, wondering what to do with two tons of hay and a heifer—they hadn't even decided what to do with the two calves received the week before...

...Money came from other unusual sources, too. A headline in one of the local papers read, "Cow yields \$162.80 for Medical Center"—her sale price; another, "Horse Comes In For HMC"—he won by a nose... Donations came from ex-residents—one from Venezuela. Two small girls showed up at headquarters with a dollar they had earned selling bunches of flowers. Two small boys pledged \$200 to be raised by polishing shoes in front of their father's barbershop, a pledge which was made good.

...Civic, fraternal, grange—all kinds of organizations held small affairs to raise their pledge money....Churches held Medical Center Sundays...

...Next, people turned to auctions...A call went out through the County for items to be sold at the Fair Grounds. Donations came in in overwhelming numbers...It took three auctioneers to handle the large items and innumerable stands to handle the baked goods, handicrafts, toys, seeds, plants and books... auctioneers worked until midnight, selling everything from pigs to poodles, antiques to autos, and stoves to steak dinners for six...when the last items had been carried away, the fund (was) \$11,000 richer...

Hunterdon County became so Medical Center conscious that there was never any doubt about what to do with excess money. When the Anti-Horse-Thief Society disbanded after years of inactivity, its treasury of \$700 went to the Medical Center. This idea was soon followed by many extinct organizations; remaining members got together to close the books officially and turn over the treasury to the campaign...

...The fund increased and special events went on...

square dances, fashion shows, hay rides, card parties...Medical Center days...Store owners announced that the day's profits would go to the fund. Whole towns united with special events...

When the final analysis of contributions to the Hunterdon Medical Center took place, contributions to the fund were slightly over \$900,000. While that number is impressive—given the limited number of households in Hunterdon County at the time—what is all the more striking is that nearly two-thirds of the contributions were in sums of \$500 or less, and were almost exclusively provided by residents and not County businesses or corporations. What truly makes that number impressive is that it was raised in the seven short months between May and December of 1949.

Despite every one of the County's best efforts, though, additional fundraising would have to occur prior to the retention of an architect and a groundbreaking ceremony. When bids were opened to build the Medi-



Ray E. Trussell, MD, was the first Director of the Medical Center. He went on to be the Commissioner of Hospitals in New York City. Photo from Beth Israel Hospital, New York City

cal Center, the Korean War had already begun. The prices contained in the bids all reflected the increased costs associated with the scarcity of building materials that had been redirected to support the war effort. The problem was, estimates for the costs associated with building the Hunterdon Medical Center were made prior to the start of the Korean War, and reflected ready access to building materials and their consequently lower cost.

At this critical juncture, the Commonwealth Fund stepped in to provide assistance in the form of bricks-and-mortar funding, a step that it normally did not take. However, the Fund—which had been approached repeatedly by many of the principals involved in the hospital project—had kept a careful watch on what was going on in Hunterdon County. So careful, in fact, that when the Korean War began affecting construction costs, the members of Commonwealth's staff who had been working with the Medical Center urged the President of the Commonwealth Fund to consider providing emergency assistance because "we have in Hunterdon County a field laboratory for progressive health developments thus far unexcelled in our long experience in dealing with communities." It was this ringing endorsement that played a crucial role in securing the additional funding necessary to move the Hunterdon Medical Center forward.

They would eventually break ground for the Hunterdon Medical Center on Armistice Day in 1951, but long before the first ceremonial shovel turned over the earth, this new hospital project was receiving national attention. Dr. Trussell often had his workdays interrupted by visits from leaders within the healthcare, governmental, and media worlds.

The reason for their visits was a simple one: Hunterdon Medical Center was unlike any other construct of its day. It was unique among New Jersey's hospitals, and the concepts brought together within the Center's programmatic structure represented an approach to healthcare so advanced that several decades later, it was still ahead of its time. It is quite probable that the reason for this was that the organizers, and later the Board of Trustees for the Medical Center, never lost sight of their vision that Hunterdon Medical Center would be a hospital that served a community, focusing its agenda on population health, not only those whom illness brought into its care.

Early on, it was viewed as essential that family physicians caring for patients integrate patient care with the specialists who would be working as full-time personnel at the Medical Center. More than five decades later, this is still the case. It was agreed that Hunterdon County's family physicians would provide primary care for patients, and specialized care and consultations would be delivered through the hospital's many specialized medical professionals. Once a patient had been successfully treated, they would return to the care of their family physician. And all of this would be accomplished in an environment that would also serve as a training ground for physicians. Years later, it is a model that still meets with success; Hunterdon Medical Center is among the nation's leaders in quality care outcomes, and one of the nation's lowest per capita costs for hospitalization.

Hunterdon Medical Center opened its doors on July 3, 1953. The 106-bed hospital was designed as a modern, three-wing, five-story building of glass and bricks. New York University Vice Chancellor Harold Voorhis said it represented "not merely a bastion of health...but a fortress of prevention as well." Photo from Hunterdon Medical Center



On July 3, 1953, the doors to the Hunterdon Medical Center were opened to the public. The intent had been to create a medical care facility that would serve a rural community's people, families, and organizations, providing the best in emergency, diagnostic, rehabilitative, preventative, and educational care and services. By the end of the Medical Center's first year of operations, more than ten thousand Hunterdon County residents had used its services—almost a quarter of the County's total population at that time. It had truly become *Hunterdon*'s Medical Center.

Within two years of the opening of its doors, the Hunterdon Medical Center launched the first of many milestones in its history when it established a Speakers Bureau to keep the residents of the County informed about healthcare topics. Two years after that, in 1957, the Center received a gift of four acres of adjacent property, to ensure adequate room for future expansion efforts. Later that same year, the Hunterdon Medical Center gained national prominence when it became the subject of an hour-long film produced and later aired by NBC. By the close of the 1950s, new fathers were welcomed into the Medical Center's delivery rooms to be with their wives during child-birth.

In 1960, Hunterdon Medical Center took its place on the national and international healthcare stages, as it hosted a delegation of 150 physicians and hospital officials from 38 countries as part of an informational tour organized by the International Hospital Federation. That same year, Hunterdon Medical Center was chosen for a pilot study regarding the education of family physicians—and it was one of only five in the entire United States to be so chosen.

National attention would not stop there, however. In 1962, the Medical Center launched its landmark home care program, a pioneering effort that earned it yet another turn in the national spotlight. The basic concept behind the creation of the home care program was a simple one: patients feel more comfortable in familiar surroundings, and that level of comfort can play a critical role in swifter recovery from illnesses.

The year 1964 saw yet another groundbreaking, this time for the first expansion of the Medical Center. It would add three new floors to the Center and be completed in 1966. There would be another large expansion of the hospital's facilities in 1978, and a Doctors Office building would break ground in 1986 to be completed in 1988. By the end of the 1960s, the Hunterdon Medical Center had a state-of-the-art Intensive Care Unit (opened in 1967) and had introduced computer billing as well.

The Phillips and Barber families, who decades earlier had placed

their estates in trust in order to fund a hospital, finally saw their dream become a reality in the early years of the 1970s, as the Phillips-Barber Family Health Center opened the doors to its temporary quarters in Lambertville, and began construction on a permanent location in 1971.

In 1972, a dramatic change came to Hunterdon Medical Center's teaching affiliation, as it switched from New York University to the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersev-Rutgers Medical School. The following year, the Medical Center welcomed back Rosemarie Kessel Coraci for a visit. Ms. Coraci was the first child born at Hunterdon Medical Center, and her return was part of a celebration to mark the hospital's first two decades of operation.



Breaking ground in 1971 for the Phillips-Barber Family Health Center is Lloyd Wescott, with shovel, a leader in developing Hunterdon's healthcare system; with him, from the left, are Dr. Frederick Knocke, U.S. Senator Harrison Williams, and an unidentified man. Photo from the Hunterdon Medical Center.

In 1977, praise came to the hospital from both the state and the national levels. First, *New Jersey Monthly* magazine named Hunterdon Medical Center "New Jersey's Finest Small Hospital." In August of that same year, the American Medical Association's flagship publication, *American Medical News*, noted that "Academicians and health planners hold Hunterdon Medical Center in the highest regard...Some say Hunterdon is not a bad model for a national health system." The August article in the *American Medical News* followed a July article in the *New York Times* that noted, "Since 1953, Hunterdon Medical Center...has reduced the cost of care and produced health and hospital statistics that are the envy of health administrators across the country."

The year 1977 also brought a different kind of national attention to Hunterdon Medical Center when a group of employed specialists filed suit against the Board of Trustees. The hospital's medical staff by-laws prohibited the 34 employed specialists from entering private practice while retaining hospital privileges. In addition, the salaries for the physicians were essentially the same, regardless of specialty or productivity. When one specialist was refused a change in the ba-

sis for compensation, a resignation was submitted with the physician's intent to open a private practice. The hospital responded by denying the physician admitting privileges, per the by-laws. Twenty-eight of the 34 employed physicians joined their colleague in a Restraint of Trade lawsuit that was eventually awarded a summary judgment in their favor the following year. The suit was a contentious one, pitting family physicians against specialists and specialists against Administration and the Board of Trustees. All 28 specialists entered into private practice while being able to retain their hospital privileges.

Soon after the judgment was rendered in March 1978, Dr. Simmons resigned his position. Mr. Wescott described the circumstances of those dramatic series of events in a *New England Journal of Medicine* article titled, "Hunterdon Medical Center, The Rise and Fall of a Medical Camelot."

With Dr. Simmons' departure, the Board first elected a new chairman in Willard B. Young Jr., a local banker, to replace Lloyd Wescott, and then recruited for a replacement President and CEO. Donald Davis was hired into that position to focus first on settling the high emotions of the medical staff and returning the hospital on its path of providing high quality medical care to the Hunterdon County residents.

The decade of the 1980s saw a series of clinical and capital projects advance. In 1981, the Medical Center unveiled a new telemetry system that provided continuous monitoring for cardiac patients, enabling them to be moved from the Intensive Care Unit but still receive a similar level of attention. The maternity suites were renovated in the early part of the decade, shortly after the opening of the sameday surgical suites in 1982. In the latter part of the decade, a helipad was added outside the Emergency Department.

In the mid-1980s, however, one critical expansion of the Hunterdon Medical Center took place that would enable facility improvements and a diverse array of healthcare initiatives to become even more effectively realized. It was the creation of a new corporate structure that titled the Hunterdon Health Services Corporation as parent company to the Hunterdon Medical Center and created the Hunterdon Medical Center Foundation, a nonprofit public foundation with the express mission of raising funds to preserve and expand healthcare programs and services for the residents of Hunterdon County. The Foundation would, over the ensuing years, become an increasingly vital means of enabling the expansion of not only the Medical Center, but the very provision of healthcare itself to the citizenry of the County. It became, in the words of one Medical Center leader, a

"renewal of the community's legacy," a return to the beginnings of the Medical Center, when Hunterdon County itself was responsible for the creation of its healthcare model. In addition, a proprietary subsidiary, the Mid-Jersey Health Corporation, was established. It enabled the Healthcare System to develop future business partnerships with the medical staff.

In July of 1990, Don Davis announced his resignation, after 12 solid years of leadership. He is credited with stabilizing the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the medical staff. His efforts set the stage for the important medical staff partnerships to follow. The Board of Trustees once again formed a search committee, headed up by Dr. John McGuire, a Johnson & Johnson executive, who had succeeded Mr. Young as Chairman of the Board in 1989. It appointed Robert P. Wise President and Chief Executive Officer of both the Hunterdon Healthcare Services Corporation and Hunterdon Medical Center on December 1, 1990.

Ten years after their renovation, the maternity suites underwent another transformation. In 1992 a ribbon was cut on an all-new maternity unit, with private birthing suites in which new mothers could deliver their child, recover, and have post-partum care provided to them all in one welcoming location. That same year, an Open House was held for the community to have a chance to see the new patient units that had been added—and four thousand County residents made it a point to visit the Center.

In its Fortieth Anniversary year, the Medical Center did not slow down, debuting home infusion therapy, and creating an affiliation with Fox Chase Cancer Center. This exceptional partnership would result in the formation of the Hunterdon Regional Cancer Program. Later in the 1990s, the Hunterdon Health and Wellness Center would open in Whitehouse Station and begin providing a diverse array of services for patients recuperating from illnesses or injuries. The model chosen for this undertaking was unique. It created a panel of physicians who would serve as advisors to the membership in order to support the healthcare needs of the population being served.

What may be considered Hunterdon Medical Center's first complementary medicine program, pet therapy, began in 1994. However, the hospital's first involvement with this now popular therapy actually took place twenty years earlier. A young girl was recovering from injuries at the hospital in 1973, and she was increasingly depressed by her slow recovery. She wanted to go back to doing the things she loved—like riding her horse. The staff of the Medical Center decided to do the next best thing; they brought the young girl's horse to the

hospital for a morale-boosting visit and its unique curative medicine. That singular success story is, today, repeated with the same magical healing results in Hunterdon Medical Center's patients' rooms, but with loving, well-trained dogs instead.

Much of the 1990s was a flurry of medical advancement, and Hunterdon County residents were a part of it all. Within those brief ten years, some of the critical medical additions made by Hunterdon Medical Center include the creation of a Sleep Disorders Center (1996) that was among the first of its kind in the region; the expansion of the Center's Mobile Intensive Care Unit into neighboring Warren County (1995); the opening of a Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory (1997); the addition of a new MRI facility (1992); the introduction of robotics in an operating room (1997); and the opening of the Hunterdon Regional Cancer Center, the only hospital-based radiation therapy facility in Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren Counties (1999). In addition to its highly advanced initiatives in diagnosis and treatment, the Center also provides County residents, and others, with research, education, prevention, detection and support.

Under the board leadership of C. Edward Herder (1996-2002), the Hunterdon Medical Center was making rapid strides in delivering extraordinary healthcare to the residents of the County. Instead of utilizing the standard acute-care model of healthcare delivery, the Medical Center's leadership focused on a more integrated model of healthcare delivery, one in which multiple facets of the patient care experience—nursing, pharmaceutical needs, physical therapy, and any other applicable elements—were connected by a comprehensive team that both supported and complemented the work of the medical staffs' office practices. The use of this model was considered radical in the 1990s; today, the integrated delivery model is generally accepted throughout New Jersey and the nation as the most effective method of providing complete care.

Integration, however, was not only limited to patient care at Hunterdon Medical Center. From the boardroom to the operating room, things in the 1990s were changing. Many of the leaders of Hunterdon Medical Center—both within the hospital itself and on the hospital's Board—had seen the pattern of success the Center had achieved throughout the 1980s and during the early years of the 1990s. With those successes came recognition, not just regionally, but nationally as well. The Medical Center's leadership recognized what the Hunterdon Medical Center had grown to be; it had become—as it was during its inaugural years—more that "just a local hospital," the hospital's healthcare initiatives had again made it a national leader. It was this integrated, "whole hospital" approach that strengthened all of Hunterdon Medical Center and, in turn, took its already exem-

plary efforts in providing healthcare to the County's citizenry to even greater heights.

One of the key reasons this integrated approach was successful was the creation of the Hunterdon Healthcare System in 1992. By redesigning and renaming the Hunterdon Health Services Corporation, the Hunterdon Healthcare System began its newly-defined mission to provide the residents of the County with access to first-class medical care by partnering with the Hunterdon Physician Practice Association to create Hunterdon Healthcare Partners. This new construct made access to physicians even easier for Hunterdon County residents, and enabled the delivery of integrated healthcare across a wider network of primary care and specialist physicians.

In 1996, Hunterdon Regional Community Health was founded as a means of developing and providing community programs to County residents, as well enhancing the Medical Center's ongoing home care services. Some fifteen years after its inaugural year, Hunterdon Regional Community Health has expanded to include Hunterdon Hospice, Visiting Health and Supportive Services, Hunterdon Community Care, and Hunterdon Infusion Services. The Mid-Jersey Health Corporation, originally created in 1986 to build a medical office building in a physician partnership, expanded its role through business partnerships with the hospital's medical staff. The result was the creation of Hunterdon Cardiovascular Health, the MRI-services provider Hunterdon Imaging Associates, and the Hunterdon Center for Surgery.

Expansion of services and programs of the Hunterdon Healthcare System continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> century under the chairmanship of Willard Young, III. The Hunterdon Healthcare System exceeded

Hunterdon Medical Center as it stands in 2014, a continuing story of the growth of a hospital and its close relationship with its community.

Photo from the Hunterdon Medical Center



\$250 million in revenues for the first time. The System became recognized nationally as a model for integrated healthcare -- one in which the focus is on providing community-wide medicine and health services centered on the patient, and ultimately driven by an overarching commitment to and passion for clinical excellence.

In 2007, James Griffith took over Chair of the Hunterdon Healthcare System, and continued to encourage program expansion beyond the hospital. That same year the Center for Healthy Aging was inaugurated and the Wound Care Center opened. Another milestone was achieved when Hunterdon Medical Center's nursing department was given national recognition in 2008 as a Magnet-designated institution – one of only 250 in the U.S. And the Hunterdon Diabetes and Nutrition Center grew quickly to become the region's largest diabetes treatment program.

As 2011 turned to 2012, the Hunterdon Healthcare System strengthened its innovative electronic health record connectivity among most staff medical practices, now totaling 250 physicians in four counties. Its population health initiative has qualified it for Medical Home designation, received federal inclusion in special Medicare payment programs, and received Robert Wood Johnson funding for pilot program modeling for hospice care.

Through the Medical Center's boards, medical staff and administration, Hunterdon's citizens continue to write the history of healthcare in the County. They do so now in an environment where the cutting edge in healthcare is no longer a day's drive to New York City or Philadelphia. Quality medical care has come quite a distance from the days of poultices and herbal remedies. Today, thanks to the tireless efforts of so many early County residents—Rose Angell, Louise Leicester, Ann Stevenson, Lloyd Wescott, Dr. Ray Trussell, the many board leaders and administrators who followed, and the hundreds of physicians who have dedicated their professional careers to bring the best of advanced medicine into a still somewhat rural community—there thrives a community-based medical organization that achieved Dr. Corwin's vision of a system that is, today, a "progressive institution...a model of its kind, aimed to bring what is best in medicine to the residents of Hunterdon County".

### Industry, 1964

by Bernard F. Ramsburg



The earliest manufacturing industry in the present bounds of Hunterdon County was carried on by the Indians who made tools and weapons from the argillite found near where Flemington is now located. Indians living considerable distances from the source of this stone came here to make their tools and weapons from it. As many of these were used in the production of food and for hunting, as well as in warfare, they can be properly called agricultural implements.

The earliest industrial activities carried on by white settlers were, of course, very closely connected with agriculture. As each farm had to be practically self-sufficient, the earliest industrial activities were spinning, weaving and other activities necessary to the manufacture of cloth, the making of clothing, the tanning of leather for shoes and for other farm uses, the making and repairing of the implements used in farming, and the grinding by hand of grain into flour and meal.

Since there is sufficient fall to most of the streams of the County, water power was early used to run mills for the grinding of grain, sawing of lumber, processing of flax seed for oil and meal, and the processing of wool. Water power was also used in some of the early iron works.

Mills using water power were soon located on many of the streams in the County. Some of these streams had excellent fall, but did not have a large flow of water. A mill located on such a stream near Tumble Falls frequently had to be shut down because of the small flow. The owner would sometimes get up in the middle of the night during a shower or storm and start the mill running. The neighbors for this reason called it the "Thundergust Mill". The importance of water was emphasized in 1893 when the Freeholders paid Wm. H. Parker \$179.50 for the 32 days his mill was shut down while a bridge in Bloomsbury was being rebuilt.

There were several mills located on a comparative short stretch of Mill Brook near Ringoes, since this stream had an excellent fall.





### Not the oldest but the most used and best preserved mills in Hunterdon.

(Left) Now the Red Mill Museum Village, this frame structure, built and operated by Ralph Hunt c.1810-1820s to process wool, prompted the village name of Hunt's Mills. Over a century until 1928 a procession of owners changed the town's name to Clinton and produced feed, flour, stone plaster, peach baskets, electricity, graphite, and talc. Five community-minded men purchased it in 1960 and began its development into the National and State historic site it is today. Photo from Red Mill Museum Village

(Right) This stone mill, now the Hunterdon Art Museum, was re-built after a fire in 1836 on the site of a flour mill said to have ground wheat for Gen. Washington's Revolutionary Army encamped in Morristown in 1777. Operated as a gristmill nearly continuously from 1836 to 1952, it sold to local citizens and on March 5, 1953 began the process of becoming an art museum. Photo from a Private Collection

These mills furnished employment for the people of Amwell, a village no longer in existence. There were also a number of mills along the South Branch of the Raritan River at different points from High Bridge to the Somerset County line. Some of these were in use well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The North Branch, too, had its mills, as did the small tributaries of the Delaware along the western edge of the County.

In 1840 there were in the County seven flour mills and 57 grist mills. A grist mill was used only for the grinding of grain for stock feed. Since much wheat was raised, some flour mills developed into quite large business enterprises. In the 1880s the introduction of the roller process for flour making began to displace the older process using stones. The number of flour mills decreased, but those remaining developed trade names and built up extensive markets. As late as 1926 the Flemington mill marketed its flour under seven brand names. But in the end the last of Hunterdon's mills succumbed to outside competition.

Those mills that were equipped to extract oil from flax seed and to grind the residue for livestock feed did a thriving business until the production of flax declined. The last such mill, located at Frenchtown, went out of business in the 1870s.

The early sawmills of the County had saws operated by waterpower. These saws operated in an up-and-down motion. There were sixty such mills in the County in 1840. The late E.T. Bush, writing in the *Hunterdon County Democrat*, October 17, 1929, said, "In my boyhood, saw mills were nearly as common as gas stations today and much sweeter smelling."

In the mid-1800s portable steam sawmills came into wide use. Easily moved from place to place, these sawmills attacked the many timber tracts bypassed thus far by progress. Sawmills and other woodworking plants located along the Delaware River used logs rafted down the river in the spring in addition to local timber.

Special woodworking mills developed in various places. There were several spoke mills to utilize the hickory timber as long as it lasted. Small factories for the manufacture of wooden farm implements were also developed. One such shop established in Frenchtown in 1836 made grain cradles, rakes, brooms, etc. It later manufactured fanning mills, and continued to do so until the early 1880s.

A rake factory was established near Flemington in 1830. Here were made grain cradles, horse and hand rakes, oak forks, harness frames, hoops for covered wagons, ox yokes and wooden tool handles. The owners in 1855 built a three-story factory which used steam, wind and horse power.

Furniture factories were established in various sections of the County during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but none was very long lived. However, some of the early cabinet makers established wide reputations for the excellence of their products. As an example of one of these was Joachim Hill of Flemington, whose grandfather's clocks are collector's items today.

Blacksmiths were very important mechanics in the early communities. Like other mechanics in those days they were creative workers, not just repairmen. They made axles, shovels, corn knives, and many other tools used on the farm and in the home. They also made fireplace irons, nails and spikes. A constant task was the shoeing of horses.

Wheelwright shops were often located beside a blacksmith shop, though they were not necessarily jointly owned. In 1850 Raritan Township, including Flemington, had 20 blacksmiths and 15 wheelwrights. In 1860, there were 30 smithies in the County employing 67 men; 17 carriage shops employing 59 men; and 12 shops making wagons and carts, with a total of 22 employees.

Coopering was an early craft and industry. A cooper made barrels,

kegs, firkins, wooden pails and other wooden containers. Barrels for apple jack, linseed oil, vinegar, pork and butter were made of white oak. Those for flour and meal were made of red and black oak. The number of coopers declined before 1850 and there was only one in the County in 1860. A stave mill at Bloomsbury lasted until 1914, however.

Gordon's report of the 1830 census fixes 17 fisheries in Hunterdon County. That they were in use and of some significance was apparent since the Board of Freeholders were paying for constables maintained at the fisheries along the Delaware and in its meeting of January 13, 1813, urged the state legislature to relieve the County of this responsibility.

Iron was mined in Hunterdon County in the early 1800s. Veins of iron near High Bridge were worked first, and later mines were operated near Cokesbury and near Bloomsbury in Alexandria Township. The iron mines closed down after the Revolution until shortly before the Civil War. The canals and the railroad brought in anthracite coal, and the blast furnaces, long closed from lack of charcoal, were reopened. About 1870, mines were operated near West Portal, Pottersville, Mt. Lebanon, and in the vicinity of Clinton.

The mines near High Bridge and West Portal were most successful. The latter in 1881 employed 380 men. However, all of the mines were closed by 1888, as they couldn't compete with Lake Superior ore. Some were re-opened for a short period in 1897 and again in 1917. A few were re-opened during World War II, but they were again closed at the conclusion of the war.

There were copper mine ventures in the vicinity of Flemington in 1817, 1836, 1848, and 1853. These discoveries were mostly south of Flemington. Veins just west of town led to the forming of a company to mine the ore. A geologist hired in 1846 reported that the ore was a good quality but not very extensive. Mining was carried on for a time after this and again in the 1850s. The mining company sold out, and a new company failed in 1861. One small copper smelter was built, but soon failed.

Hunterdon County not only had iron ore, but also had timber to make charcoal for smelting and limestone to use as a flux. The first ironworks, a bloomery, was established near High Bridge in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. An iron furnace was built in 1742 on Spruce Run, where the water power was used to run a slitting and rolling mill.

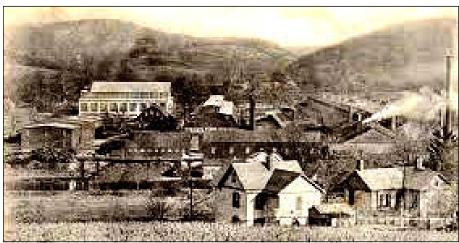
A furnace was built near Cokesbury in 1752 and another was built in Norton. These were owned by Allen and Turner, who had extensive land holdings in the northern part of the County. They lost their iron works during the Revolution. The Union Furnace, as the Spruce Run furnace was called locally, was acquired by the superintendent, Robert Taylor. His family was connected with the iron and steel industry in that area until recent times. Iron was also made in Kingwood Township and near Pittstown.

During the Revolution, Union Furnace made cannon balls for the American Army. It was operated until the early 1780s. There developed a scarcity of wood for charcoal, which was probably the main reason for the closing of the furnace at that time.

Factories where articles of iron and steel were made were established in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Hiram Deats, whose father, John Deats, had invented the Deats plow in 1828, established a factory at Quakertown in 1831. He also made stoves, sled shoes, kettles, school desks, and other articles. During the 1840s his main factory was moved to Pittstown, where water power was available. Here, Mr. Deats also made horse power threshing machines, reapers, mowers and corn shellers. He established a branch factory at Stockton in 1852. He died in 1887, and a nephew carried on his business until 1904, when it was sold.

There were other factories and foundries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Lambertville Iron Works, established in 1859, ran for nearly 50 years. J.W. Scott operated a foundry in Flemington during the latter part of the 1880s and early 1900s. He specialized in the manufacture of iron bridges.

The Taylor-Wharton Iron & Steel Company in High Bridge traced its roots to the Union Iron Works established in 1742. The firm sold to Harsco Corporation in 1953, and was liquidated in 1954. and its High Bridge plant closed in 1970. It is currently occupied by several small industrial businesses. Photo from the Hunterdon County Historical Society



A small foundry in Flemington was bought in 1893 by John Foran. He started with 15 workmen and soon had over 100. He supplied supports for the New York subway and iron and steel for buildings in Philadelphia. Several products of the foundry were sent to Panama and Hawaii. The foundry had extensive war orders in both World War I and World War II. It was one of the largest employers in the County for years.

Though there was no iron making at High Bridge from the 1780s until around the time of the Civil War, Lewis H. Taylor in 1851 started a small bloomery forge and manufactured wagon axles. This plant gradually shifted to the making of railway car axles. After the Civil War the Taylor Iron and Steel Company was organized, and the South Branch was dammed to furnish water power to run trip hammers. Its main products were car wheels and other railway equipment.

The company in 1892 pioneered in the use of manganese steel and soon was making manganese steel products such as rails, safes and mining and excavating machinery parts. These mining and excavating machinery parts were exported to all parts of the world. The teeth of many of the power shovels used in digging the Panama Canal were made in High Bridge. This company also made armaments in the Spanish-American War and in World War I and II. Through a merger in 1943 the company became the Taylor-Wharton Steel Company, which also had plants in Phillipsburg and in Easton.

With the building of the Belvidere and Delaware Railroad, its main shops were established at Lambertville in 1851. Not only were repairs made in the company's equipment, but locomotives and cars were manufactured. When the railroad was taken over by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1871, these shops were discontinued.

From the earliest days local quarries furnished building stone for various purposes. Later, large quarries for building stone were opened in the vicinity of Lambertville, Stockton and Raven Rock. Fine building stone was shipped from these via the Feeder Canal to Trenton, and by way of the Delaware on to Camden and Philadelphia, where it was used for fine homes and churches as well as for bridges. These quarries were discontinued when concrete came into extensive use as a building material. Later, trap rock quarries were opened. The stone from these became important for road building and concrete work.

Limestone was quarried particularly in the northern part of the County in the early 1800s, and kilns were established for burning it. This lime was used principally for agricultural purposes. The re-



By 1820, the local production of dozens of bushels of lime in Hunterdon County for agricultural use was a growing industry, but by 1880 was losing ground to larger, centralized rotary kilns that could produce lime by hundreds of tons. The largest surviving lime kiln in Hunterdon is in Holland Township off the road between Little York and Spring Mills. Date stones tell us the left fireplace arch was built in 1842 by "M. Bunn" and center and right arches in 1869 by "G. W. V.". Photo from Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission

mains of many old lime kilns still may be seen in the northern part of the County.

Clay products were made in the early Colonial times. Bricks were especially needed for buildings and chimneys. Amwell had a brick-yard during pioneer days, and one was established in Flemington in 1790. In 1825 Lambertville had a sizeable one, and there were smaller ones at Croton and Clinton. But by 1860, there were only two in the County. The one in Flemington was operated until the early 1900s.

There was an early pottery at Potterstown and also one at Amwell. A pottery was established by Samuel Hill at Flemington in 1814. He operated it successfully until his death in 1850.

It was then bought by Abraham Fulper, who expanded it. In 1915 Fulper pottery won prizes at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco for fine glazes. The company, however, still has a large retail sales outlet in Flemington, though the pottery itself is produced elsewhere.

Other potteries were started from time to time, but the only other one to last for long was operated at Lambertville from 1908 to 1929.

The Frenchtown Porcelain Company, established in 1910, specialized

in the manufacturing of spark plugs and porcelain specialties for electrical and plumbing works. It has been quite successful and is still a large employer.

The tanning of leather was at first a farm industry, but commercial tanneries were soon developed. One was established in Quakertown in 1736. The Case tannery in Flemington, which ran from 1783 to 1851, did custom work as well as commercial tanning. It bought

hides from all over the County, and after 1800 regularly purchased hides in New York City, some of them imported from South America. In 1840, there were 23 tanneries in the County, and about the same number in 1850. But by 1860 there were only seven. A few lasted until 1882, but they couldn't meet the competition of large tanneries elsewhere and eventually closed.

The tanners not only furnished a market for hides but also purchased the bark of oak, beech, birch and hemlock trees. A small amount of willow bark was also used for the



This rare tan bark millstone, c.1765, was used by John Allen of Quakertown to crush tree bark to make tannins for curing leather. The stone was used upright, as shown, with a pole through the center so it could be turned by oxen. Photo by Marty Campanelli

tanning of sheep skin. The tanneries used lime for removing hair from the hides. This hair was used in plaster mortar.

In the early days, leather was used principally by local shoemakers and harness makers. After 1840, factory-made shoes became common. At that time there was a small shoe factory in Lambertville that employed three women and ten men.

Several other small shoe factories were established in the County from time to time, but all were short-lived. Saddle and harness-making had a history similar to that of shoemaking. Local saddlers and harness-makers took care of the demand in their own localities until machine-made products forced them out of business. After the Civil War, saddle and harness-making shops became merely sales outlets for machine made harness and saddles. The saddles and harness makers became merely repairmen.

Distilling was apparently carried on in the County by the time of the Revolution. Two stills were advertised for sale in 1780—one of 101 gallons capacity and the other 31 gallons. Applejack was the most

important product of the distilleries. As apples were grown on almost every farm, distilleries furnished an important market. In 1832, Gordon in his *Gazetteer* reported that Hunterdon County had five distilleries for grain and 56 for applejack. The latter were located as follows by townships: Alexandria, six; Amwell, twelve; Bethlehem, five; Kingwood, seven; Lebanon, eleven; Readington, six; and Tewksbury, nine.

A distillery built in Fairmount in 1827 by John Lutz and later owned by others was not financially successful until bought by William Henry Fleming in 1880. He and later his son, Philip, operated it until shortly before prohibition went into effect.

An applejack distillery was established about 1900 at King's Station near Pittstown. It was operated by John Kraut for 15 years and then operated by his nephew until prohibition. After repeal, it was operated by the Lord Stirling Distillery, Inc., until 1940. The Distilled Liquor Corporation built a distillery at Flemington after the repeal of prohibition and operated from February 1, 1934, to September 20, 1936. Among its products was applejack.

Vinegar was a common farm product in the early times. Later it was made commercially by different firms. The largest of these was the New Jersey Cider Vinegar Works which was started by Zebulon Stout on his farm between Voorhees Corner and Reaville. Stout and John P. Case of Clover Hill were partners before 1878. The business was later transferred to the John P. Case farm. In 1906 the business was sold to E.P. VanAtta and a Mr. Hungerford. They built a new plant in Flemington that was operated until 1937.

The early settlers made cloth at home from both wool and flax products on their own farms. The entire process of cloth manufacture from production of raw materials to the finished products was completed on the farm and in the home. Later artisans took over certain special tasks in the manufacture of cloth, such as fulling and carding wool and weaving both linen and wool. Woolen mills were built in various parts of the County in the early 1800s. The last of these was operated until 1880. A linen mill was started in Lambertville in 1938 and had a reputation of making fine cloth. It failed in the 1850s. There were several attempts to manufacture cotton cloth and silk but all were apparently short lived.

The making of clothing was first done in the home and this continued to be the case for work clothes until the 1830s. However, tailoring became fairly common in the Colonial period. Some tailors went from house to house to make clothes, "beating the cat," as the expression went. There were also dressmakers, known as "manutamakers," and milliners. Factories for the making of hats and clothes later ap-

peared, but none was successful for long. A shirt factory in Clinton was operated longer than any others. It started in 1898 and remained in operation until 1931. It resumed operation in the early 1940s and was again operated for several years.

India rubber goods were made in Lambertville by 1860. This industry had its ups and downs but was quite successful in the early 1900s. Its "Snag-Proof" boots were widely used. The company was absorbed by the Good-Year Rubber Co. and closed in 1928. The Dural Rubber Co. was established in Flemington in 1917. This company has changed hands several times and it is still in operation. It was established to make tires, but later stopped this and has since made a variety of rubber products.

Papermaking has become one of the most important industries in the County. A small paper mill was built north of Lambertville in 1831 but only lasted a few years. Another was built in 1859, and another in 1868 and another in 1876. This last paper maker continued until 1928. The founders of the Riegel Paper Corporation began their first paper making in Hunterdon County in a converted grist mill at Finesville, N.J. The company developed primarily in the Delaware Valley with mills at Hughesville, Riegelsville, Warren Glen and Milford. The Milford plant is now one of the largest mills of the company. Recently the firm established a plant near Flemington for the manufacture of flexible packaging.

The Empire Glass Company, which made cut glass, was started in 1902 but operated only a few years. The Flemington Cut Glass Com-

From 1908 until 2006, the Flemington Cut Glass Company was based at 156 Main Street . Photo from Hunterdon County Historical Society



pany was started in 1908 and in 1913 was employing 70 people. Today, this company operates a very successful retail business. Customers from a wide area daily visit their retail shop.

Flemington and some of the other towns of the County built locally owned power plants in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Later, these were taken over by the New Jersey Power and Light Co. This company in the later 1920s built a large generating plant in Holland Township along the Delaware River which now furnishes electricity to a good part of northwestern New Jersey.

Since World War II a number of other large industries have located in the County. These include: F.L. Smidth & Co. at Lebanon, which makes heavy steel articles; and in Flemington the Ethyl Visqueen Co., which makes plastics; Cary Chemical Co., U.S. Bronze Powder Co., Bemis Bros. Bag Co., U.S. Pressed Steel Co., and Lipton Tea Co. With the completion of Interstate 78 across the northern part of the County, there will doubtless be further industrial development in this area. A table using census figures, will show the increase in the industry of the County during the past 90 years. The last line of figures is from the Hunterdon County Planning Board.

Year	Establishments	Labor Force
1870	614	2,273
1900	298	2,444
1920	145	2,800
1940	40	2,519
1958	103	4,473

*Industry, 1989* update by Jay Comeforo

A ccurate comparisons between the information initially presented in this section on "Industry" with those of 1989 are difficult. Technological changes contribute to changes in our social and cultural mores and hence, later, our perceived needs and how they are met. Also, since the original preparation of this book, the Standard Industrial Classification was created in an effort to assist in categorizing as well as to minimize "double-counting" of the many goods and services produced in the ever-changing products available in our country. The Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) covers the entire field of economic activities. In this chapter, interest centers on manufacturing. Manufacturing is defined to include establishments en-

gaged in the mechanical or chemical transformation of materials or substances into new products. Organizations engaged in assembling component parts of manufactured products are also considered manufacturing if the new product is neither a structure nor a fixed improvement.

From the early 1700s to today, there has been a continual change in the industry of Hunterdon County. The rate of change has varied as a consequence of periodic significant technological or political events, as exemplified by the development of different power sources, introduction of new modes of transportation, and changes in demand imposed by war. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and before, Hunterdon's industry was associated with the needs imposed by an agriculturally oriented economy based on animal and water power. Hence, flour and grist mills, saw mills, woodworking, barrel making, blacksmithing, wheelwrights and furniture-making along with quarrying represented the major portion of the County's industry.

Mining, especially the mining of iron and its processing and fabrication were in operation by the mid-1700s and became a source of ammunition during the Revolutionary War. The Civil War intensified the need for steel products. The iron industry continued through the 19th century but at a diminishing output. Enterprises making specialty products continued to be successful for many years. (Deats Patented Plows and other farm equipment as well as his stoves and household products are one example.) Deats' factories were in operation for approximately 70 years. The Lambertville Iron Works was in operation during the second half of the 19th century producing steel and cast iron products. The company made sturdy, durable bridges. At least two are still in use. The bridge over the South Branch of the Raritan River at Clinton, built by William Cowin of Lambertville, is an outstanding example. A third example of a highly successful enterprise was the Foran Foundry in Flemington, which existed for 60 years. It was located where the Liberty Village outlet complex now stands. In fact, several of the structures in the village were part of the Foran plant. This foundry had a close relationship with the State and produced many of the manhole covers required as well as cast iron lamp posts and a variety of other products. During both World Wars it was busy with military-related steel products including some of the boilers for the "Liberty Ships" of World War II. Following the war, its fortunes declined until the foundry closed and went into bankruptcy.

The presence in the County of Johanna Farms and its associated kindred food product operations, the Thomas J. Lipton plant, Presco Food Products, established in 1877, all in the Flemington area, and the Original Trenton Cracker Company of Lambertville, makes the

processing of food and allied products one of the largest industrial segment employers in the County today, with a total of 1,100 persons employed.

Since 1960, commercial vineyards and wineries have been established in the County. Encouraged by changes in public preference in alcoholic drinks as well as changes in the land tax laws, wineries flourished, and by the late 1980s, wines produced in Hunterdon County have earned a favorable regional reputation. In alphabetical order, the wineries are as follows: Amwell Valley Vineyard, Del Vista Vineyards, King's Road Vineyards and Tewksbury Wine Cellars. Employment varies with the seasons. The annual cumulative output approximates 35,000 gallons. In addition to the wineries, there are vineyards which limit themselves to the growing and selling of grapes. These are Belle Terra, Goat Hill, Jonathan, Seabrook and Stonehouse. The total number of acres under cultivation for grapes in the County approximates 100.

In the past 30 years the technical ceramic industry in the County has continued to maintain its presence but has not grown appreciably. The total employment is approximately 200 with a yearly product value of \$13 million. Since 1959, Frenchtown Ceramics has undergone several name changes and five changes in ownership but still remains the largest producer of technical ceramics in the County with an employment of 125. Lambertville Ceramic and Manufacture, founded in 1948 by F. Richard Cass, remains a family-owned operation as does Ellis Ceramtek, a company begun in 1973. Consolidated

The Main Street truss bridge across the South Branch of the Raritan River in Clinton was fabricated by the Lambertville Iron Works and put in place in 1870. A combination of cast and wrought iron, the bridge is one of few of that design that now survive in this country. Photo by George Trogler



Ceramics and Metallizing Corporation, founded in 1961, became a nationally recognized and successful producer of advanced ceramics. It was sold to Brush Wellman and relocated out of New Jersey in 1986.

Locally-made cut glass, for which Flemington was once well-known, has dwindled to economic insignificance, the victim of foreign competition. As a retail operation, glassware remains a sizeable activity primarily centered in Flemington.

The quarries and the manufacturers of concrete have continued to flourish since 1960, fed by the increased growth in road construction and the domestic and commercial building surge. The total product value in the mid-1980s for aggregated concrete approximated \$40 million with an employment of 250.

Papermaking and allied products continue as a major industrial segment with a total employment estimated to be 850-900 with an annual product value in excess of \$100 million. The long-established Riegel Paper Corporation and its several plants were acquired by the James River Corporation. The operations have been concentrated into the Milford plant, operating as the Riegel Products Corporation, subsidiary of James River. Since 1960, two new paper-related corporations were started in the County. Quality Packaging Materials began with a capitalization of \$1,000 in the old fire house in Clinton in 1960. Its rapid success resulted in a series of expansions so that it now occupies a 100,000 sq. ft. plant on Rt. 12 in Baptistown. In 1982, it was acquired by Jefferson Smurfit Corporation. In 1963, the Rexham Corporation constructed a 250,000 sq. ft. plant for manufacturing flexible packaging materials in Flemington on 40 acres. In 1989, this operation became Hargro Flexible Packaging.

The once significant woodworking mills and furniture making of the 19<sup>th</sup> century have succumbed to competition from other sections of the country. The H.L. Birum Company of Flemington, established in 1963, and the Doll House Factory of Lebanon, begun in 1971, have developed prosperous niches through specialization. The Birum Company produces office and landscape partitions and office systems; the Doll House Factory makes special miniature lumber and millwork and dollhouses with over 8,000 separate products. The number employed is 40-50.

The manufacture of chemical and allied products is represented by perhaps half a dozen operations with a total employment of approximately 175 and a total annual sales volume of \$45 million. A review of the rubber and miscellaneous plastic products segment of the county's industrial activities indicates the manufacture of products

made of rubber ceased in the 1960s while plastic products manufacturing grew considerably. There are four companies listed in the recent SIC-30 group as manufacturers of plastic products. Two are operations of large national companies: the Bemis Company, with a 90,000 sq. ft. facility and the Tredegar Film Products Plant of Tredegar Industries Inc. Tredegar Film Products was created in July 1989 when Ethyl Corporation spun off the former VisQueen division. Thus Tredegar became a major producer of polyethylene film for industrial, agricultural and packaging applications, operating in the former 90,000 sq. ft. VisQueen plant on 15 acres on River Road in Flemington, where Ethyl VisQueen had begun in 1955. The other two companies are Kappus Plastic Company of Hampton and J. & J. Engraving of High Bridge, both established in 1969. The total employment in these companies approaches 250.

Metalworking began in the County with the working of iron approximately 200 years ago. The industry continues but is almost exclusively non-ferrous. Primarily it consists of aluminum, bronze products and the manufacture of metal powders. Total employment approximates 200 with U.S. Bronze Powders of Flemington being the largest.

The fabrication of special metal parts for a variety of applications was until the beginning of this century primarily the province of the local blacksmith. In a sense these needs are now served by machine shops. The County has at least three dozen machine shops, most with less than 10 employees, some with 1-3, so-called "one-man shops." There are perhaps 5-7 with sales exceeding \$1 million. As a general rule, machine shops produce components rather than completed products.

The County also has a number of companies that fabricate metal products, items the consumer may buy, rather than components. They vary from metal washers to air-conditioning ductwork, to springs, structural shapes, and high pressure vessels. The variety, size and complexity are as great as the needs of a complex society.

The location of the Unisys company in the Flemington area in 1980 profoundly increased the significance of that industrial segment identified as "industrial machinery and computer equipment" (SIC 35) in the County's total manufacturing output. Of the twelve companies considered, none, other than Unisys, employs over 80. The total employment in this category is 1,200, of which Unisys accounts for 80%. The diversity of the industrial machinery produced in the County covers a broad spectrum, such as automated equipment handling minute parts, custom made packaging equipment, a variety of commercial washers, water treatment equipment, pulverizing

equipment for plastics, and the manufacture of personal computers and associated devices. Approximately half of the organizations making up this industrial section have been established since 1960. The plant area represented by these newer companies amounts to 360,000 sq. ft. on a total of 65 acres. This is appreciably greater than that of the existing companies established prior to 1960 in this category.

There are six County enterprises producing electronic and electrical equipment and components other than computers. (SIC-36 designation.) All began in the twenty-year period between 1957-1977. In 1989, their total employment was 480, with annual sales totaling \$50 million.

Organizations manufacturing measuring, analyzing and controlling instruments as well as medical devices are classified as SIC-38. Hunterdon has two small enterprises supplying these products, with total employment at 25 and estimated annual output at \$3 million.

The total employment in the 100 manufacturing enterprises considered in 1989 approximated 5,500. Half of this employment is accounted for by Unisys, Johanna Farms, Lipton and James River. The information sources were the 1988 edition of *Standard Industrial Classification*, the 1989 *Business Directory* of the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, and personal contacts.

As it has since the establishment of the County, the on-going changes in manufacturing continue. Hunterdon certainly is not a "one-industry" county as 16 of the 20 major manufacturing groups listed in the Standard Industrial Classification are represented.

*Industry, 2014* by David R. Reading

Since 1989 Hunterdon County has experienced a continuing decrease in the manufacturing sector of the economy and simultaneously growth of the service sector. This is not surprising as local economies reflect the influence of globalization on the American economic system that is pushing manufacturing off-shore. This industry update includes the service sector as well as the other industrial classifications including manufacturing. It is hoped this approach will more accurately describe the current industrial landscape in Hunterdon County.

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), which

replaced the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system, provides industry classifications in two groups: goods-producing industries and service-producing industries. Goods-producing industries include Agriculture, Mining, Construction, and Manufacturing. Service-producing industries include Information,



Vineyards number among Hunterdon's industries and are winning critical acclaim for their wines. Photo from beneducevineyards.com

Financial Activities, Professional Services, Education and Health Services, Leisure and Hospitality, and other Non-Public Administration Services. Accurate and comprehensive data describing the shifts within the industrial sectors are difficult to obtain but employment statistics within the sectors can provide some insight. According to the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development (LWD), between 2007 and 2012 every NAICS sector lost jobs in the County except for Education and Health Services and Leisure and Hospitality. Also according to the LWD, Hunterdon County lost jobs at a faster rate than the state (-5.1 % vs. -3.5%) between 2004 and 2009. Manufacturing in particular shrank at a 21.3% rate, also greater than the state. Some of the business actions contributing to this statistic include the following:

In the food processing industries the Thomas J. Lipton plant in Flemington and the Original Trenton Cracker Company in Lambertville closed. There are now no ceramics operations at present in Hunterdon County. The Lambertville Ceramics and Manufacturing Company and the technical ceramic businesses in Frenchtown have ceased operations. The Frenchtown facility is now used for multiple small businesses. One company, Bio-Serve, makes feed for laboratory animals. The Bemis Company with a 90,000-square-foot facility closed in December of 2011. At this writing, there is no news of a replacement firm.

Construction employment fell 25% between 2007 and 2012 and two cement plants closed along with two block manufacturers. During 2011 the one bright spot was the installation of solar panel farms for generating electric power. Four were completed and numerous new ones are on the drawing boards.

The papermaking industries also continue to decline. At one point the Riegel Paper Company had four large mills along the Delaware River, with the largest facility being in Milford. The Milford plant is presently being dismantled. The Hughesville plant is closed and is for sale. The remaining paper facility above Milford is owned by Georgia Pacific and employs approximately 100 people. The largest and longest-term company in the metal working business was U.S. Bronze Powders. It is closed and the facility is up for sale. John Lutz Welding and Fabricating in Kingwood Township ceased operations in 2011. The F.L. Smidth & Co. (making heavy steel articles) also closed.

The Tredegar Film Products' 90,000-square-foot plant in Raritan Township discontinued manufacturing operations. The facility is now a chemical storage and distribution warehouse. Adjacent to this facility is the old 1950s Gary Chemical Co. This has changed owners and, until the present owner, was a Tenneco PVC manufacturing facility. At present, the plant is divided into smaller manufacturing operations.

Hunterdon Healthcare System (Hunterdon Medical Center) in Raritan Township has replaced Riegel Paper as the County's largest employer. It is not insignificant that a service sector operation has replaced a manufacturing sector company. Johanna Foods in Raritan Township continues to expand and is a large producer and distributor of fruit juices, drinks, and yogurt. Readington Farms in Readington Township is now owned by ShopRite and manufactures fluid milk products, bottled water, fruit punch, fruit juices, shelf-stable milk, and butter products. The milk in bygone days was from local dairy herds. Today Hunterdon has approximately six remaining dairy farms and milk comes from outside the County.

Commercial vineyards and wineries continue to expand and most of the 1989 wineries are still in business. Unionville Vineyards opened in 1993, Mount Salem Vineyards and Old York Cellars in 2010, and Beneduce Vineyards in 2012. Presco Food Products expanded operations and built a new facility in Raritan Township. The Rexham Corporation built a 250,000 square-foot facility in 1963, which is still in operation. It is now operated by Tekni Plex, Inc. and continues in flexible packaging. The adjacent research center was sold off and converted into a building products warehouse. The MEL Chemicals plant (formerly Magnesium Elektron, Inc.) in Kingwood Township is a manufacturer of industrial inorganic chemicals.

The active firm left in the plastics manufacturing is Kappus Plastic Company in Hampton. The companies fabricating metal products



Foster Wheeler North America Corporation is located just off Interstate 78 near Clinton. Photo from fwc.com

include Atlantic Springs in Raritan Township (manufacturers of springs), Kuhl Corporation in Copper Hill (manufacturers of poultry equipment for a worldwide market) and Hitran in Raritan Township (power transmission equipment).

Merck, one of the nation's largest pharmaceutical companies, (NAICS 55), will close its corporate headquarters in Whitehouse and moved to Kenilworth in a cost-saving move. However, service sector firms located in what we might call the "Route 78 Corridor" remain. These include the Exxon Mobil Research and Engineering Technology Center near Annandale; Chubb Insurance Company in Whitehouse Station; AM Best global headquarters, a full-service credit rating organization serving the insurance industry in Oldwick; Foster Wheeler North America Corp has its Operations & Engineering Center in Clinton; Woodmont Properties has a large distribution center in Lebanon; and NY Life Insurance Information Technology also has a center in Lebanon.

The LWD projects continued employment growth for Hunterdon through 2020 in the majority of the NAICS industrial sector codes as shown in the table on the following page.

In conclusion the County continues to prosper with its diverse economy and 6.3% unemployment rate, while the State is 8.5%, as reported in August of 2013. The future is promising.

### Projected Growth 2010-2020

Industry	Annual Average Growth Rate %
Construction	2.4
Healthcare & Social Services	1.9
Natural Resources & Mining	1.9
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	1.5
Utilities	1.5
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	1.4
Transportation & Warehousing	1.4
Accommodation & Food Service	1.2
Other Services	1.2
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	1.0
Educational Services	1.0
Finance & Insurance	0.9
Retail Trade	0.5
Wholesale Trade	0.2
Administrative & Waste Services	-0.6
Government	-0.6
Management of Companies & Enterprises	-0.7
Information	-1.0
Manufacturing	-1.0

### Transportation, 1964

by Pauline Brown (Mrs. Frederick) Stothoff



Transportation facilities in Hunterdon County have undergone great changes during the past two hundred and fifty years. In contemplating these changes one may recall from what humble origins our routes and modes of travel have sprung. When the first white settlers came to the area, they traveled over numerous Indian footpaths already worn through the forests. These trails have formed the skeletons of our present road system. For instance, a path which led from New Hope and the Delaware, thence through Lambertville, Mount Airy, Ringoes, Larison's Corner, Reaville, Three Bridges, Centerville and ultimately to the Newark area, became the Old York Road, one of the best known of Hunterdon County highways. Other Indian paths were used by the settlers as the foundations for their initial roads.

To make these trails passable later for carts or wagons, work had to be done felling trees, clearing away matted vines and stunted bushes, and laying to one side the decayed tree trunks which had fallen. Where there were gullies, trees were cut down to fill in, and logs were laid over small streams to create crude bridges.

Before the first decade of the eighteenth century, the land now comprising Hunterdon County was still largely unsurveyed wilderness. But emigrants were moving westward, up the Raritan River and its branches, and northward up the Delaware. The main road for north and south travel was the road leading from Trenton through Flemington, Cherryville, Pittstown and Hampton, ultimately reaching the Delaware Water Gap. Another early road ran east and west between New Brunswick and Easton. At Reaville, the Amwell Road branched off from the Old York Road, leading to New Brunswick. Further south at Lambertville an alternate route to New Brunswick through Hopewell became the Hopewell road. Similar roads connected settlements along the northern part of the county.

Road conditions in the eighteenth century were very bad, but they were accepted with resignation by most inhabitants as being a part of the way of life in this still-new area. One gentlemen, however, did not appreciate the crude roads. He was the Rev. William Frazer, rector of three widely separated Episcopal parishes in Amwell, King-

wood, and Musconetcong. In a letter dated October 20, 1768, he wrote to his superior, the Rev. Dr. Benton in London, as follows: "...Muskenetconk does not seem calculated to be joined with Amwell and Kingwood as they are separated by a ridge of high mountains (the Musconetcong range), which the frost and snow in winter render quite impassable, and even in good weather I find it very troublesome from the distance which is twenty-five miles and the roughness of the roads—to attend once in three weeks."

Little attention was paid to the improvement of roads during the Revolutionary War. After the War, through constant use by so many heavy wagons, roads continually grew worse. Yet roads were vital for the county's prosperity in agriculture, trade and commerce. This need stimulated both government and private companies to make plans for building new roads. Private companies were given monopolies by the state, in return for which they were to surface and maintain the roads. Profits were to come from tolls levied for use of the roads, and improvements were to be made from these tolls.

The northern part of the county was crossed by the New Jersey Turnpike, incorporated in 1806, which ran between New Brunswick and Easton. In Hunterdon County it took over the old road, leading through Whitehouse, Potterstown and Clinton. Farmers along the road, particularly in Hunterdon County, forcibly resisted paying tolls. After thirty years of existence the New Jersey Turnpike surrendered its Hunterdon County portion to the various townships.

The New Germantown and the Spruce Run Turnpike Companies were both incorporated in 1813 for the purpose of connecting the Washington and the New Jersey Turnpikes. The New Germantown Company road began at North Branch, intersecting and branching off from the New Jersey Turnpike, thence on through present day Oldwick and terminating at the Washington Turnpike in Morris County. The company failed after some years of financial difficulties. The Spruce Run Company built its road from Clinton northward through the Spruce Run Valley, also intending to connect with the Washington Turnpike. The road was never completed, although sections of it were improved. In the southern part of the county the old Hopewell road was taken over and improved to become the Georgetown and Franklin Turnpike. This highway to New Brunswick was used by many Conestoga and Jersey wagons.

Too many turnpikes were built in sparsely settled regions in an-

ticipation of traffic that never materialized. Profits were lacking, and the tolls received were never enough to maintain the roads. In other words, the turnpikes failed because of lack of public support.

Roads throughout the county continued to be "fair-weather" roads, and the men appointed to be overseers usually let the road repairs wait until their farm work was completed, and their spring carting finished. They would then get to work, using up their appropriations quickly during that slack season. When fall came, the roads were again in disrepair. Through the winter, little was done to make roads more passable. On April 8, 1830, Dr. William Johnson of Whitehouse wrote a letter to his son James, who was living in Philadelphia. He mentioned having sent a letter some time previously by a friend who was going to the city, but who, "finding the roads much worse than he expected, he returned after getting as far as Lambertville."

Winter presented the worst problems — blizzards and resulting drifts, strangling traffic. While people could travel during the winter on horse-drawn sleighs, it was risky business because they might be caught some distance from home in a thaw, with a discouraging trip home via wagon or horseback. The spring presented new problems — deep ruts and mire so deep as to cause injury to horses and anger to men. The need for better roads became increasingly apparent.

During the latter quarter of the nineteenth century there was State legislation which enabled the County to take over, macadamize and maintain certain main roads. But since the landowner was to bear the greater part of the cost of construction, no roads were macadamized as yet in Hunterdon County. Some time later new legislation provided that only one-tenth of construction costs should be paid by the owner, with State aid up to one-third of the cost, the balance to be paid by the County. Still there were objections. The main street of Flemington had its face lifted and macadamized in 1901, and when the road broke up because of heavy travel the opponents to the new roads were delighted. When further legislation permitted that ten per cent of construction costs be paid by the township instead of the landowner, the objections to macadamizing rapidly decreased. The first macadamized road of the county was that from Lambertville to Ringoes, a road which was extended to Flemington the following year. By 1909 Alexander B. Allen, in a booklet issued by the Flemington Board of Trade, could write: "Macadam roads extend from the town so that either New York or Philadelphia can be reached on macadam from Flemington." Between the years 1910 and 1915 the County borrowed a total of \$315,000.00 to repair roads.

Two factors were important in the movement for better roads. First, bicycles had become quite popular, and bicycle clubs agitated for

better roads. Second, automobile traffic on the highways during the first years of the twentieth century made existing macadam roads quite inadequate. The Freeholders were constantly besieged to construct better roads, and although the cost was high they were gradually forced to acquiesce. The new highway system gradually filled out over the county, so that today no one is far from a surfaced road.

In the early 1920's there was agitation for a State road through the county. There were several reasons for this. Road costs had increased; there was no large city within the county to help bear the burden of road construction costs; and new highways were without doubt beneficial to people of other areas. A bill was finally passed in Trenton authorizing the construction of a State road through the county. The roads from Trenton to Buttsville and from Ringoes to Lambertville were taken over and the roads from Flemington to Somerville, Flemington to Frenchtown, and the old New Jersey Turnpike.

Even greater changes have taken place more recently. The old New Jersey Turnpike, with some changes in routing, has become United States Route 22, a most important highway servicing the county and all surrounding areas. Interstate 78 is supplementing and in the future will further supplement Route 22. Dualization of Route 202 from Somerville to Flemington was completed in 1962, and the section from Flemington to Ringoes is presently in the process of dualization.

At this writing, the County has 88 miles of State roads, 247.9 miles of county roads and 756 miles of township roads. The rural charm of the County's roads has not as yet been destroyed, for delightful roads, relatively free of traffic, can be reached within a very few minutes' ride from almost any point in the county.

Early crossing of the streams and rivers of Hunterdon County was by fording them at shallow places. The Indian paths had often crossed the stream at fording places. However, fords were at best not very satisfactory.

The use of ferries on the Delaware River in present Hunterdon County began early in the eighteenth century. The early ferries were small, and were propelled either by poles, oars, or sails. The traveler and his saddlebags were conveyed across the stream, while his horse swam behind. Later ferries, upon the opening of roads and the coming of wheeled vehicles, were, according to Lequear in his *Traditions of Hunterdon*, long, narrow boats with flat bottoms and vertical sides. "The bottom sloped upwards at the ends, to the heights of the sides, which were parallel and about a foot high. At each end was a flap, so hinged as to be turned inboard while crossing and outward at



Ferries were the way across rivers from Colonial times until the mid-19th century when bridges were first built, starting at Trenton and Easton. With no photographs available of local ferries, this shows a typical ferry style. Photo: ncpedia.org.

the landing, to make connection with the shore, forming a short bridge for the passage of teams."

The various ferries along the Delaware have gone under many names during the course of their existence. The best known in history is Coryell's Ferry, at what is now Lambertville. Originally owned by Samuel Coates (who had evidently operated it without a patent), the ferry was inherited in 1723 by his son John, who obtained a patent for it in 1726. The ferry was bought in 1728 by John Purcel, who in turn sold it to John Emanuel Coryell on February 8, 1732. Coryell's patent is dated January 7, 1733, and was granted by the Royal Governor in the name of King George III. Coryell's Ferry figured strategically in the early part of the Revolutionary War. On three occasions, substantial numbers of the Continental Army were conveyed across the river. Joseph Lambert succeeded the Coryells at the Ferry, which was abandoned at the building of the bridge to New Hope in 1814. The ferry at this point had to divide the traffic with another from present New Hope.

The ferry at present Stockton was started by John Reading, one of the first settlers in Hunterdon County. It became known as Howell's Ferry after 1735, having been purchased by Daniel Howell. A change of name came about again after 1772, when the ferry became Robinson's Ferry. However, when a George Hoppock took it over in 1791 it reverted to the early name of Howell's Ferry. After the completion of the Centre Bridge at Stockton in 1814, the ferry was abandoned.

Frenchtown had ferry service dating from about 1741, when it was noted as London Ferry. It has had many names, after various operators of it on both the New Jersey and Pennsylvania shores. At various times the ferry was called Mechlenburg Ferry, Tinbrook's Ferry,

Prigmore's Ferry, Calvin's Ferry, Sherrerd's Ferry, and Edwin's Ferry. It was of such strategic importance during the Revolutionary War that the Council of Safety of New Jersey on April 13, 1778, agreed to exempt "John Sherard and three men employed by him at his ferry from doing duty in militia until further orders." Thomas Lowrey, famous Hunterdon County landowner, purchased the ferry property about 1785. In 1794, he sold to Paul Henri Mallet Prevost, a French refugee, and the village and ferry soon were called Frenchtown. A bridge replaced the ferry in 1844.

The ferry at Point Pleasant (Byram) was probably established about 1739 and continued to serve until the Point Pleasant Delaware Bridge was built in 1855. According to an undated petition (prior to 1779) for the granting of a license for Warford tavern, this was a very busy area in that "two great fisheries" were built there and "vast numbers of people are collected there". Apparently the ferry was used extensively through the years.

The ferry at Milford had been known by various names. It was called the Lowreytown Ferry (after Thomas Lowrey) for a time, then Burnt Mills Ferry, and finally Mill-ford Ferry. It was abandoned after the building of the Milford Delaware Bridge in 1842. Another ferry, opposite Durham, Pa., at the mouth of the Musconetcong River, was known as Pursley's Ferry or Parsley's Ferry. Later, in 1797, Andrew Rose in applying for his tavern license stated that he resides at the "old ferry known by the name of Jones Ferry." With the building of the Riegelsville Bridge, just outside the county, in 1837, the ferry was no longer needed.

One can readily imagine the amount of traffic across these various ferries, with travelers going in all directions on business. The ferries were vital to the fisheries, iron furnaces, lumber mills, flour mills, and stores at many locations along the Delaware and other streams.

As early as 1795, the County Board of Chosen Freeholders began levying taxes to bridge the inland creeks. Spanning of the Delaware was, however, left in the hands of private stock companies, which built toll bridges at Lambertville and Stockton in 1814. After much agitation for more bridges across the Delaware, the following were built: Raven Rock in 1835; Riegelsville in 1837; Milford in 1842; Frenchtown in 1844; and Point Pleasant-Byram in 1855.

All of these bridges were covered wooden structures. In their day their construction was completely utilitarian, for the wooden covering kept ice, snow and rain from the roadway. Most of them had picturesque toll houses. These covered bridges had their troubles, however. Several suffered from the ravages of fire or lightning, and all were partially or completely destroyed by the floods of 1841, 1862

and 1903.

There is no longer a bridge at Point Pleasant-Byram, only ruined piers. Raven Rock bridge was destroyed in 1947 after being condemned a few years before as being unsafe. A suspension foot bridge now exists over the stone piers. The bridge to Riegelsville was destroyed in the flood of 1903, and now also has a suspension bridge. At all four other locations steel and cement bridges have been built to withstand the fury of the Delaware at



The last remaining covered bridge in New Jersey spans the Wickecheoke Creek between Sergeantsville and Rosemont in Delaware Township. First constructed in 1872, it was damaged and replaced with original materials in 1961. Photo from the Hunterdon County Historical Society

high flood times. Between 1919 and 1933, all of the bridges became free as the result of the operations of a joint state commission.

A look at the minute book of the Milford Delaware Bridge Company gives some idea of transportation facilities, and of the trials and tribulations of the bridge owners. Rates in 1842, when the bridge was completed, were as follows:

For every coach, landau, chariot, phaeton, or		
other pleasurable carriage with four wheels		
drawn by four horses	50	cents
For the same carriage with two horses	$37^{1/2}$	2 cents
For every wagon with four horses	$37^{1/2}$	cents
For every carriage of the same description		
drawn by two horses	25	cents
For every chaise, riding chair, sulky, cart or		
other two-wheeled carriage, or sleigh or sled,		
with two horses	25	cents
For the same with one horse	15	cents
For a single horse and rider	10	cents
For every led or driven horse or mule	5	cents
For every foot passenger	1	cent
For every head of horned cattle	3	cents
For every sheep or swine	$1/_{2}$	cent

Toll rates for hauling of iron ore, lime, stone, coal, plaster lumber, flour and meal were regulated from time to time. Persons going to church and returning home were able to pass free of toll. Later, however, the toll collector was instructed to collect toll from those churchgoers who crossed the bridge twenty minutes or more after church service had ended! In 1912 the tollkeeper was allowed to open the toll gate and close the toll office while he went to church.

Anyone disposed to travel faster than a walk was to pay a fine of five dollars.

By 1886 a toll rate of three cents one way was levied on bicycles. By 1900 tolls were fixed for automobiles — one seat, ten cents one way; two seats or more, fifteen cents one way. Automobiles with three seats or more were levied on in 1913 at thirty-five cents one way. At the same time, a charge of twenty-five cents one way was made on circus teams. The Joint State Commission finally bought the bridge after more than one try at it, and at the same time, the Frenchtown bridge, for \$45,000.00 each.

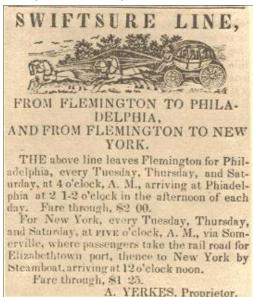
Today covered bridges are considered a romantic relic of the past, and are greatly admired and coveted. The only remaining covered bridge in the county and in the State is known as the Green Sergeant's Bridge, near Sergeantsville. Recently this old bridge was completely renovated by the State, and thus preserved for posterity.

In the early days of the county nearly everybody traveled by horseback. Lequear, in his *Traditions of Hunterdon*, tells of a John Manners who went to a gristmill at Trenton, on horseback, from Ringoes. The road was little more than a bridle path through the forest. One horse carried three bushels of corn; another horse carried one bushel, plus the rider. Riders waited for their corn to be ground and brought it back with them. However, wagons of various sizes were soon to be found on the roads. Other vehicles included two-wheeled

carts, or sulkies, so-called "chairs" pulled by one horse and chaises or "shays" pulled by one or two horses. A few gentlemen had carriages. The use of private coaches was restricted to the wealthy.

When one thinks of Hunterdon County and its stage-coaches, it brings to mind that Old York Road. Although this road was one of the first wagon roads in the Colony, the first recorded mention of this road was in the Will of Samuel Coates, first owner of the Coryell Ferry, in 1723, where he describes his land as being near the "Yoark Road". According

Advertisement, 1800. From the Hunterdon County Historical Society



to Dr. G.S. Mott the road was never surveyed. In 1764 it was designated a "King's Highway".

The coaches of the wealthy came long distances along the road, often accompanied by an outrider mount, to be ridden should the lady riding in the coach tire of the monotony of the trip. Philadelphia aristocracy traveled along the York Road on their way to Schooley's Mountain, which in the days after the Revolution was a popular resort, being well known for its "iron spring". These wealthy folk traveled in their own large coaches, drawn by four to six horses, and with the family coat-of-arms emblazoned on the sides.

An advertisement appeared in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* of September 25, 1769, which read as follows:

## The New Stage To NEW YORK, on the OLD YORK ROAD

SETS out Tomorrow, the 26th instant, from the sign of the Bunch of Grapes in Third-street, at Sunrise, proceeds by the Crooked Billet, Coryell's Ferry, Bound-Brook, Newark, and from thence to Powle's Hook, opposite New-York. It will set out regularly every Tuesday Morning, during the Winter Season; perform the journey, from Philadelphia to Powle's Hook, in Two Days, and exchange passengers at the South Branch of Raritan, at the house of Obadiah Taylor, formerly kept by Daniel Seaburn (Three Bridges), on Wednesday Morning, when one Stage returns to Philadelphia, and other to Powle's Hook.

Each Passenger to pay TEN SHILLINGS from Philadelphia to the South Branch, and TEN SHILLINGS from the South Branch to Powle's Hook, ferriage free, and THREE PENCE per mile for any distance between; and goods at the rate of TWENTY SHILLINGS per hundred weight, from Philadelphia to New-York.

That part of the country is very pleasant; the distance and goodness of the road not inferior to any from this to New-York. There is but one ferry from this to Newark. The road is thickly settled by a number of wealthy farmers and merchants, who promise to give every encouragement possible to the stage. And as the principal proprietors of said stage live on the road, the best usage may be expected.

This route was considered a rival to the stages which operated between Philadelphia and new York on other routes outside of the County. The stages at first were light wagons built high in the rear and low in front, chaise fashion. Passengers sat on hard wooden benches placed across the wagon. Stage coaches replaced the wagons in the latter years of the eighteenth century.

Service was discontinued during the Revolutionary War, but was resumed after it. Stages ran from each city on weekdays, stopping overnight at Centerville. The "Swiftsure Line" was founded in 1799 by a group of twelve men who lived along the Old York Road. The fare in 1799 was \$5.00, and packages and freight were also carried. After 1800 the stage line began to stop off overnight at Flemington instead of at Centerville, continuing on in the morning and picking up the Old York Road at Centerville. In 1808 trips on Sundays were included. This line continued in operation between Philadelphia and New York until railroad lines cut across its route.

An advertisement appeared in the *Hunterdon Democrat* in 1844 to the effect that a daily stage would run from Flemington to Somerville every day except Sunday, arriving in Somerville "in time for the New York cars." Return time was 1:00 P.M. at Somerville, arriving in Flemington at 4:00 P.M. to "connect with the Philadelphia stage". There were a few other short-run stages in the county during the first half of the nineteenth century, among them a stage from Trenton through Ringoes, Flemington and Pittstown to Bloomsbury. This line connected with a steamboat line from Philadelphia at Trenton.

When railroads appeared, the number of short stage lines increased. One of the first to serve as a feeder to a railroad was the route from Flemington to New Brunswick, via Reaville, Clover Hill, Neshanic and Millstone. The stage stopped at Millstone in later years when that town received a rail connection. Another stage came from West Portal or Bloomsbury, to Clinton, then to Somerville to connect with the New Jersey Central. Whitehouse Station became the terminus for this stage line after the Jersey Central had reached that point. Flemington Junction came to have a stage line from Flemington in 1875 when the Lehigh Valley Railroad (then Easton and Amboy) had reached the Junction. At various times there were short stages operating between Milford and Clinton; Annandale and Clinton; Pottersville and Whitehouse; and Oldwick and Whitehouse Station.

One looks back on stagecoach travel in America and is amused to think of taking up to three days to travel from Philadelphia to New York. Yet, in those colonial and post-colonial days, speed was as essential as it is to the twentieth century. Visitors in New York remarked even then about the hurrying of the pedestrians, and the galloping of the cart horses on the streets. Likewise, one is amazed to think that there was so much activity on the Old York Road, the Amwell Road, the Hopewell Road and the stage roads to the north

counties of the state.

During a considerable part of the county's history, freighting by wagon was the principal means by which a farmer was able to sell his produce and a storekeeper to buy supplies. One can readily picture all the hustle and bustle as the heavy wagons loaded with all manner of merchandise traveled over the Old York- Amwell Road, the Hopewell Road and the Easton Pike to New Brunswick. Traffic was heaviest in fall after the harvest and in the spring when the accumulation of flour, applejack, cheese, barreled meat and other products was carried to market. At both times, too, storekeepers laid in stocks of manufactured goods. Wagons were driven sometimes by farmers relishing the opportunity to get away from their chores, but more often by hardened teamsters, who were hired for regular trips to New Brunswick, Trenton and Raritan Landing.

At the old stone storehouse at Mt. Airy cured hams and other meats were stored in huge vats. When weather and road conditions permitted, these would be taken by heavily laden wagons drawn by four to six horses to the Delaware, there to be loaded into Durham boats and carried to Philadelphia. Similar wagon traffic came into Frenchtown, Milford and other river points.

The Conestoga wagon was one of the newer types of wagons which became popular in New Jersey during the late eighteenth-century. It had been developed by German settlers in the Conestoga valley in Pennsylvania. Because of its construction a load of produce was kept firmly in place no matter how steep a hill might be. It had a body shaped like a boat, and the bottom was curved. The distinctive silhouette of the Conestoga wagon was made by slanting the ends of the wagon outward. The wagon was covered with a piece of white homespun material. The rear wheels of the larger Conestogas were from five to six feet high, with tires six inches broad. Such a wagon was capable of carrying a load of about six tons, one ton for each horse. Great changes in freighting by wagon came about with the coming of the canals and railroads. Trips were shortened considerably, and marketing facilities for farmers were increased greatly.

Transportation by water assumed great importance in early days. Rafts, flatboats and dugout canoes were much used at flood times. The farmers in the eastern part of Hunterdon County transported their produce down the Raritan to Raritan Landing and New Brunswick. The Delaware River, especially, was used for transporting produce and lumber, although it presented some serious hazards to transportation. Rapids and rocks near Lambertville required a pilot who knew his work well.

There were three types of craft used on the Delaware River: the raft,



It was Durham boats that General George Washington had secured for the Christmas Day crossing of the Delaware River, and the march on Trenton that turned the Revolutionary War in America's favor. This famous painting, now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York City, is by German artist Emanuel Leutze. Photo from metmuseum.org

the Durham boat, and the coal ark. The raft was made of logs or of logs covered with lumber. In the late eighteenth century rafting developed into an important business. The rafting season was at its height in early spring when the winter cutting was over and the river was at a higher level than normal, making passage quicker and easier. Thousands upon thousands of board feet of lumber were shipped down the Delaware from the Lehigh Valley and the upper Delaware. Gradually, as the resources of these areas were depleted, rafting declined, so that after 1900 few rafts appeared on the river.

The Durham boat answered the needs of the craft which could go against the current. It was so named because of its use in carrying iron from Durham, Pennsylvania, to the market. Before the days of canals and railroads these Durham boats carried the majority of the freight between Philadelphia and the upper Delaware. An ordinary Durham boat, being sixty feet long and eight feet wide, could carry 150 barrels of flour or 600 bushels of corn. Some towns along the river owned a single boat or even small fleets of them. The Durham boat did not survive the coming of the canals, for it was not well adapted to canal travel.

Coal arks were used on the Delaware for carrying coal to Philadelphia from the upper Delaware. These arks were rectangular boxes made of heavy planks spiked together. They were 16 to 18 feet wide and 20 to 25 feet long. According to M.S. Henry in his *History of the Lehigh* 



The Delaware and Raritan Canal system as seen on a historic map. From andrewillner.com

Valley, two of these sections were at first joined together by hinges, allowing them to bend up and down in passing dams and sluices. Then as the channels were straightened and improved, the number of sections in each boat was increased, until their whole length sometimes reached 180 feet. Coal arks also became obsolete upon the coming of the canals.

The residents of New Jersey had long felt the need for canals across the state. The Morris Canal, completed in 1831, was of some benefit to northern Hunterdon, but residents here were more interested in the second canal, the Delaware and Raritan. Finally in 1830 a company was enabled to begin construction,

completing it in 1834. The canal traversed east and west between Trenton and New Brunswick, by way of the Assunpink, Millstone and Raritan Rivers. The canals gradually brought river trade to a standstill, because the handling of bulky products such as coal could be taken care of more efficiently by canal boats.

Hunterdon shared the use of the Delaware and Raritan through a navigable feeder which diverted water from the Delaware River at Raven Rock. Irish immigrants were among the men who came to Hunterdon County to help dig the feeder for the canal. Lambertville profited greatly with the coming of the canal. Long hauling trips were made shorter; the town received much shipping business. Flour mills and sawmills utilized the canal's flow for their operation. Boats with considerable tonnage used the canal to Trenton.

The construction of a Pennsylvania canal – the Delaware Division Canal – gave the flour and corn mill operators the opportunity to haul their produce over the Milford and Frenchtown bridges to connect with this canal. Canal boats, having been loaded at the lime kilns, were brought down this Delaware Division Canal, pulled across the Delaware River by a cable just below Lambertville, then shunted into the feeder canal.

The canal and feeder were able to compete with the railroads for

some years, and in the 1860s carried their peak loads. But by the turn of the century operations had nearly ceased. The feeder today has no value as a transportation facility, although it is important for carrying industrial water to Central Jersey.

Even before the canals were built, agitation for railroads was begun in the state. Plans were being promulgated for a railroad from Elizabethtown to Somerville, and citizens of Hunterdon foresaw gains in securing a line from Somerville to Flemington, with a spur to Clinton. Agitation for such a line resulted in public meetings and lobbying in Trenton. It was some years, however, before these efforts bore fruit. The Elizabethtown and Somerville Railroad Company received its charter in 1831. Constantly at financial disadvantages, the company after many difficulties managed to run its line to Somerville in 1841. The Camden and Amboy Railroad had been operating for seven years by this time.

The county still had no railroad; but late in 1847 the Somerville and Easton Company, a newly chartered corporation, pushed the railroad from Somerville to Whitehouse. In May of 1852, the railroad went as far as Clinton, where passengers could take a stage to Easton. Then, in July of 1852, the last rails were laid. A celebration was held, and the directors, their guests and a band traveled the distance to Easton via the "glorious landscapes of Hunterdon and Warren" to the cheers and flag waving of the crowds at the stations.

The two railroad companies were joined in 1849 to become the Central Railroad of New Jersey. This railroad was most important to the northern part of Hunterdon County in opening up its resources. Increase in trade, population, and contacts with the outside resulted. One could even visit New York and return on the same day! Even more important, the railroad brought in anthracite coal, much needed by industry, timber of the area having long since been depleted.

In 1856 a junction was made with the Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad at Hampton Junction. Flemington finally in 1863 had a branch line from Somerville. Today the New Jersey Central has passenger stations at Annandale, Ludlow-Asbury, Hampton, High Bridge, Lebanon, Glen Gardner, Whitehouse and Bloomsbury. Commuters from these stations account for an average of 279 passengers per weekday to the New York metropolitan area. Freight stations on the Central are located at Flemington, Annandale, Whitehouse, High Bridge and Hampton.

Many people felt that a railroad line from Trenton to Belvidere along the Delaware River would be most desirable. The State in 1848 finally authorized the road, but a branch to Flemington was voted



This Pennsylvania Railroad depot in Flemington is now a bank, and passenger rail service is not available as in the past. Photo: The Hunterdon County Historical Society

down. The railroad was constructed to Lambertville in 1851. Frenchtown and Milford were reached by 1853, and Belvidere, the terminus, in 1854.

A number of Flemington and Lambertville citizens now formed the Flemington Railroad Company, pushing through a charter for a separate line. The railroad from Lambertville to Flemington was finished in 1854, and although passenger business gradually increased, freight business was by far more important. The Pennsylvania Railroad eventually absorbed both the Belvidere and Delaware and the Flemington Railroads.

The Lehigh Valley Railroad began as the Easton and Amboy Railroad. A plan for a very direct route east to Perth Amboy meant construction of a tunnel through Jugtown or Musconetcong Mountain, a tremendous undertaking. Irish and Negro laborers working on the tunnel became involved in racial altercations with the result that several men were killed in 1872. Locally this affair was known as the Pattenburg Riots.

Local contractors worked on building the road and grading while the tunnel was being dug. Finally in 1875 the road was completed. Stations were built at Flemington Junction, Landsdown, Pattenburg, Bloomsbury, and at other points for passenger trade, which was a secondary consideration for the company. Spurs were eventually built to Clinton, then from Flemington Junction to Flemington, and from Landsdown to Pittstown. The tunnel at West Portal was widened in 1927 and 1928 and is one of the widest tunnels in the world. Before ceasing its passenger operations in 1961, the railroad carried approximately 300 commuters to the metropolitan area, each day.

One other railroad line in the northern part of the county filled a great need for carrying produce for a time. This was the Rockaway

Valley Railroad (known locally as the "Rockabye Baby"), which had plans to connect the Jersey Central at Whitehouse with the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western at Morristown. Begun at Whitehouse in 1888, it finally reached its destination in 1900. This railroad suffered through the failure of the peach crop, once so important to the economy of the county. It never had enough traffic, and became bankrupt. Finally, it went out of existence during World War I.

For a time after 1905, citizens of Lambertville were proud to live in the only town in the county possessing a trolley line. Running west across the Delaware bridge to New Hope, and south to Trenton, the line never penetrated further into the county.

Those Hunterdon County residents of today who were the "young folk" of the 1890s can recall with a great deal of nostalgia the bicycle craze that affected just about everyone. While bicycle clubs demanded better roads strictly for bicycle jaunts, their agitation was unwittingly a big factor in the building of better roads for the automobile then coming into limited use. Among the bicycle-riding enthusiasts were evidently some individuals who did not obey the law, for in the Hunterdon County Republican of August 26, 1896, the editor bewailed the fact that the "ordinance requiring bicycles to carry lanterns is not obeyed." Early in the 1900s the bicycle craze left as suddenly as it had begun.

Automobiles had begun to appear in the County before the turn of the century. The *Republican* in its issue of September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1896 told readers that the Duryea horseless wagon was being shown at Trenton and being raced around the racetrack. The editor was somewhat doubtful as to the merits of the horseless wagon, but he was willing to give the readers the "opportunity to judge for themselves during the Fair." The automobile *did* catch on. By 1900, the covered bridges of the Delaware had toll rates for automobiles, both one-seaters and two-seaters. In 1909, the Flemington Board of Trade booklet proudly announced, "Fifty-two automobiles are owned in the town. Two garages are required to attend to the wants of their owners." By 1956, there were nearly 25,000 cars in Hunterdon County, and the end was not in sight.

The motor bus first took over the remaining stagecoach lines, then branched further afield. Buses play an important role today in the county. Since the Lehigh Valley Railroad terminated its passenger services, metropolitan commuters have been forced to drive to Whitehouse or to other points north to connect with the New Jersey Central; or to Hopewell for the Reading Railroad; or to Raritan or Somerville also for the New Jersey Central. For some time now the West Hunterdon Transit Company has been giving daily express



Brothers Charles and Frank Duryea of Springfield, MA created the first American gasoline-powered "horseless-carriage" in 1893. The *Hunterdon Republican* reported on September 23, 1896, that one was displayed at the Trenton Fair and raced around the track there. Photo: www.eyewitness to history

service to New York from Frenchtown, Baptistown, Croton and Flemington. Many commuters from this area are taking advantage of this facility. Transportation from New Hope and Lambertville to New York, and from Clinton to New York is provided by the Public Service buses.

The county benefits directly and indirectly by trucking, a major factor in transportation of all industrial and commercial facilities. Hundreds of trucks, both registered in

New Jersey and out of state, traverse the county's highways daily, particularly Interstate 78, and U.S. 22, U.S. 202, and N.J. 69. [2014: Changed overnight in 1967 to Route 31.]

A fair number of the county's residents use the facilities of the metropolitan airports for business and pleasure trips, as well as for air express and freight. Private planes are flown by a number of residents of the county. Sky Manor, a private flying club near Pittstown, teaches prospective pilots, and has hangars for privately-owned planes. In addition, flight transportation is available from Sky Manor.

A history of transportation in Hunterdon County cannot neglect the pipelines. The oldest pipelines in use in Hunterdon County are owned and operated by the Tidewater Pipe Co., Ltd., with offices in Hazleton, Pa. These lines at one time transmitted crude oil to the Bayonne refineries. Today, however, the Tidewater refineries in Delaware ship fuel oil by tanker to Bayonne, and from that area the fuel oil is piped to Changewater and on through Hunterdon County via Tewksbury and Lebanon Townships westward to Hudsondale, Pa.

Another early pipeline was laid by the Tuscarora Oil Company about 1906. This line had storage tanks on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware, at Centre Bridge, and transported unprocessed oil. The route which the Tuscarora followed began, in Hunterdon County, north of Lambertville near the Alexauken Creek Bridge; thence

northeasterly through Delaware and East Amwell Townships to a point south of Ringoes; thence entering Somerset County near Clover Hill. The company was eventually absorbed by Standard.

During the Second World War, eleven major oil companies organized the corporation known as the War Emergency Pipelines, Inc. and entered into an agreement with Defense Plant Corporation, a government agency, to furnish experienced personnel to build and operate a 24-inch pipeline for crude oil, and also a 20-inch pipeline for processed petroleum. These pipelines were to be constructed from Texas to the Eastern seaboard. Permission was granted early in January of 1943 by the County Freeholders to a Texas contractor to burrow under the County highways in Delaware, Amwell, and Raritan Townships to lay the big pipeline, the route roughly paralleling the line of the Tuscarora Oil Company. The veteran Texas and Oklahoma crews faced problems with the Hunterdon County red shale, which was in a muddy state during those winter months. In addition they experienced difficulty dynamiting the trap rock of the Sourland Mountains. Work was finally completed in Hunterdon County after delays of several months.

A project related to the installation of the "Big Inch" was the construction of the pumping station at the foot of Mt. Airy, off Route 69. In order to give the crude oil the last surge to force it to Bayway, extra power lines were required. This station was the eastern-most of 26 stations along the line which ran from Texas to Illinois. The line used 24-inch pipe to Phoenixville, Pa. where part of the load was diverted to Philadelphia. The line across Hunterdon is 20-inch. The "Little Big Inch" system for processed petroleum products was begun in April of 1943, and was completed in early 1944. This system paralleled the Big Inch in Hunterdon County.

When World War II ended, Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation bought the two pipelines, and in May of 1947 began transmitting natural gas through them. Gas transmission at that time was a fairly recent development. In 1949 Texas Eastern, together with several other companies, formed Algonquin Gas Transmission Company to extend natural gas service into New England. A new pipeline was constructed and tied into Texas Eastern's system at Mount Airy. This 26-inch pipeline left Hunterdon east of Reaville. Two other lines were constructed to satisfy the growing demand for natural gas — one, a 30-inch line in 1958; the other a 36-inch, in 1961. Texas Eastern thus has four lines for gas transmission through Hunterdon County, plus the one by way of the Algonquin tie-in.

The Buckeye Pipe Line Company installed, about 1953, an 18-inch pipeline which runs from Bayonne to upper New York State. In July

of 1959, a new site for a pumping station was chosen on the west side of Route 69 near Copper Hill. The new station was designed to boost the flow of petroleum across the county below Flemington. In July, 1958, Transcontinental Gas Pipe Corporation made application to the Freeholders to cross county roads in order to install 30-inch pipe for the piping of high pressure gas to the Leidy underground storage field near Williamsport, Pa. This line was to be a branch line connecting with the company's main line running from Texas to New York, also crossing Hunterdon. Several Stanton residents opposed the line on the grounds that the right of eminent domain did not apply to gas storage as it did to transmission of gas. After lengthy testimony on either side, the verdict went to Transcontinental. When the work was finally completed gas could flow into storage in the old exhausted natural gas field near Williamsport through the warm months, and in the opposite direction during the winter heating season.

It may be interesting to mention that according to a county newspaper account Samuel VanSyckle, born in Hunterdon County, was the originator of the pipeline transmission system. The article states that VanSyckle went to the Pennsylvania oil fields in 1860, and after cornering the oil barrel market, hit upon the idea of a pipeline because he was paying exorbitant fees to teamsters who carted the barrels of oil from the wells. VanSyckle is buried in this county, at Little York, also according to the newspaper account.

# Transportation, 1989 update by John Kellogg

In many respects, the changes that Hunterdon County has seen in the past 25 years have been as significant as those that the County experienced in the preceding 250 years. To a large extent, this period of rapid change can be attributable to the region of the State in which the County is located and the highway network which serves the County. The completion of Interstate 78 through the northern part of Hunterdon County in the late 1960s irreversibly opened up the County to the growth pressures which the northern part of the State experienced from the New York metropolitan area during the period following the Second World War.

The census in 1960 recorded a County population of 54,107. In 1989 the Hunterdon County Planning Board estimated that the total number of County residents had increased to 114,592. This more than doubling of the County's population in a 30-year period is the result

of new employment opportunities coming on-line in the counties to the east of Hunterdon and the easy access from Hunterdon to these jobs that Interstate 78 provided. During the 1970s many of the research and office projects that have resulted in the transition of New Jersey from a manufacturing economy to a service economy in the closing years of the twentieth century developed along the Interstate 287 Corridor in Morris, Somerset and Middlesex Counties to the east. Many of the workers in these facilities turned to Hunterdon County as a place to live.

During the 1970s, Hunterdon County offered an attractive housing alternative to those relocating to the new jobs in the counties to the east. At that time real estate in Hunterdon County was relatively inexpensive compared to those areas of northern and central New Jersey which were closer to the New York metropolitan area and which had already been subjected to significant development pressures. To many who had tired of the older suburbs closer to the New York City area, Hunterdon County and its rural character offered an attractive living alternative. The opening of the Interstate highway in the late 1960s made the County accessible for those working to the east and who chose the lifestyle that was available here.

While the decade of the 1970s was marked by the emergence of Hunterdon County as a bedroom community, the 1980s saw the first of what are likely to be many major employers relocating to the County. In the early 1980s the Exxon Corporation opened a major research facility in Clinton Township. A few years later the Burroughs Corporation (now Unisys) opened a computer assembly plant in Raritan Township. In 1987 Foster Wheeler relocated their new corporate headquarters to Union Township. Ground was broken in 1988 for the new Merck corporate headquarters in Readington Township. In the early 1990s it is expected that many of the several million square feet of office space which have received municipal approval will come on-line in the County.

One of the reasons that Hunterdon County has become attractive to major office developers is the easy access that the area has to Newark International Airport. With the completion of the missing link of Interstate 78 in the Watchung area of Union County in the mid-1980s, most of the northern part of the County is now within 30-45 minutes of a major metropolitan airport. Advances in communication technology within the past decade no longer make it necessary for major corporate facilities to be located in close proximity to each other. Access to major transportation facilities and desirable places to live are now among the major factors considered by corporations in deciding where to locate.

While the impact of Interstate 78 on Hunterdon County has been significant, it certainly has not been the only reason the County has grown rapidly in the past couple of decades. The County's location midway between New York and Philadelphia, as it was when a convenient overnight stop in the days when a stagecoach ride between these two major cities took two days, is now within a reasonable commuting distance for those who choose to work in the metropolitan areas and maintain a rural lifestyle. Convenient commuter bus service to New York is available from both Flemington and Clinton. Major state highways such as Routes 202, 31, 12, and 29 provide access to and through the central and northwestern parts of the State. The County road system funnels traffic throughout the county to a roadway network, which consists of municipal, county, and state highways.

A challenge that the County and its municipalities have been faced with in the past decade has been to encourage growth to occur in those areas served by the best roads so that the limited funds available to maintain and upgrade our highway system will be spent most effectively. The narrow, winding roads with one-lane bridges that characterize much of Hunterdon County are remnants of a former time. Having outlived their usefulness, they will need to be updated to meet the needs of the twenty-first century. Hopefully, with thoughtful planning, this will be accomplished without destroying the rural character that has always made Hunterdon a unique region of New Jersey.

### Transportation, 2014

update by Stephanie Stevens

Oh, what a change in transportation we have seen in the last 25 years!

Route 78, which in the 1980-90s opened this County to large housing developments, is now so impacted that, in the morning rush hour, it looks like the largest parking lot in New Jersey. Daily the whine of emergency vehicles warn of yet another accident on Route 78. Interestingly much of 78's traffic emanates in Pennsylvania where housing and taxes are much more reasonable.

What else has changed?

Route 31, heretofore a quite rural highway, has been widened to four lanes - with no letup in traffic. It, too, is in need of expansion from

Clinton north through Warren County. Traffic through northern 31 winds single file like a slow snake up to Washington. Widening, we're told, is a long-term State plan. On the whole length of Route 31, traffic lights have popped up to control the flow of vehicles. Traffic lights are now to be found on County roads as well, a sure sign of increased usage.

Bike lanes, not needed in rural Hunterdon, now are an integral part of new, and where they fit, old roads. Flemington's second circle has been modified by the State with new signage and drainage.

A most useful addition for those without transportation is the LINK bus that picks up and returns passengers to all the far flung areas of the County. No more must a doctor's appointment be missed or shopping be put off until family members can accommodate – the LINK is at hand!

Along with LINK, Flemington now has taxi service and the buses to New York are filled to capacity. Rail service, formerly supplied by the Central Railroad of New Jersey, is now from New Jersey Transit, a part of the Department of Transportation. Trains run on a daily schedule from High Bridge to Newark with a transfer to New York—and they are double-decker to accommodate expanded ridership.

Both Solberg and Alexandria airports continue in private ownership, but in times of emergency (like experienced on September 11, 2001) are pressed into service for the greater good.

All of Hunterdon's 244 miles of County roads, many of which were Colonial paths, bear the brunt of a population that has reached over 127,000 – a growth of over 40,000 since 1980.

In the past, rural families owned one truck, farm vehicles and perhaps a car. Today suburban families own no fewer than two cars; most own three or more — all of which increase traffic on county roads. Seldom seen today are farm vehicles, which were hallmarks of traffic in a rural county. And the few that venture out to move hay, plows, and animals are considered annoying by the fast travelling, scurrying public.

In spite of enormous changes to Hunterdon, or maybe because of them, we have saved the structure and ambiance of our truss bridges, stone arch bridges, covered bridge at Sergeantsville (the last in New Jersey), and triple stone arch bridge at Stephensburg. Historic authenticity is the byword when repairing these wonderful structures that remind us of quieter days. Days when all transportation was by foot, horse, or carriage on dirt trails. Days when the beauty of surroundings embraced and emboldened the spirit.

#### Sponsors, 1989



Businesses and residents who assisted in re-publishing the first update of the 1964 book.

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